

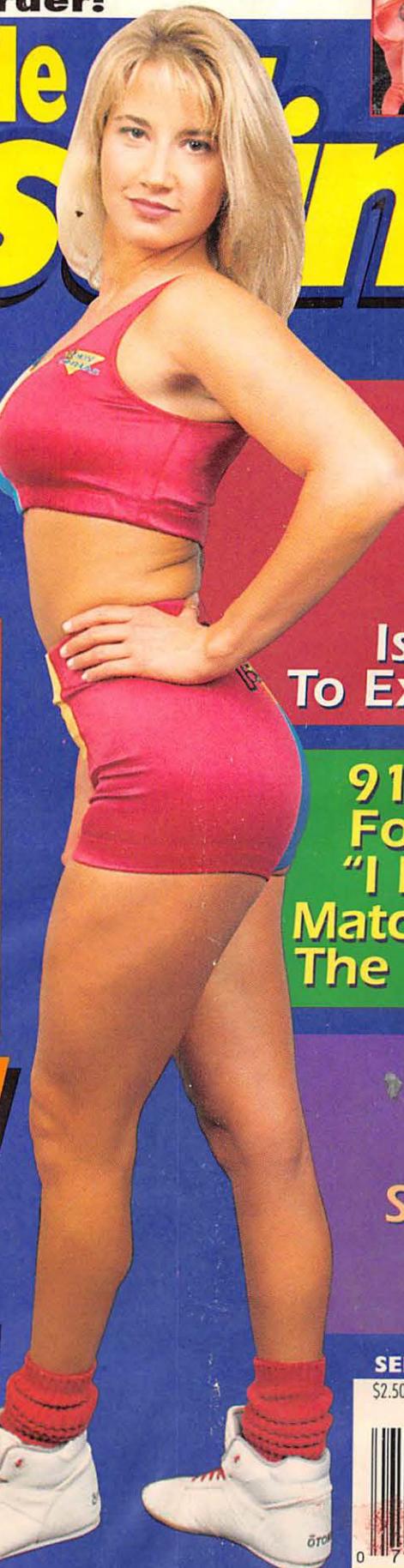
CHAMPIONSHIP CHAOS!

Our Plan To Restore Order!

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Inside Wrestling®

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Time
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**911's Call
For Help:
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SEPTEMBER 1996

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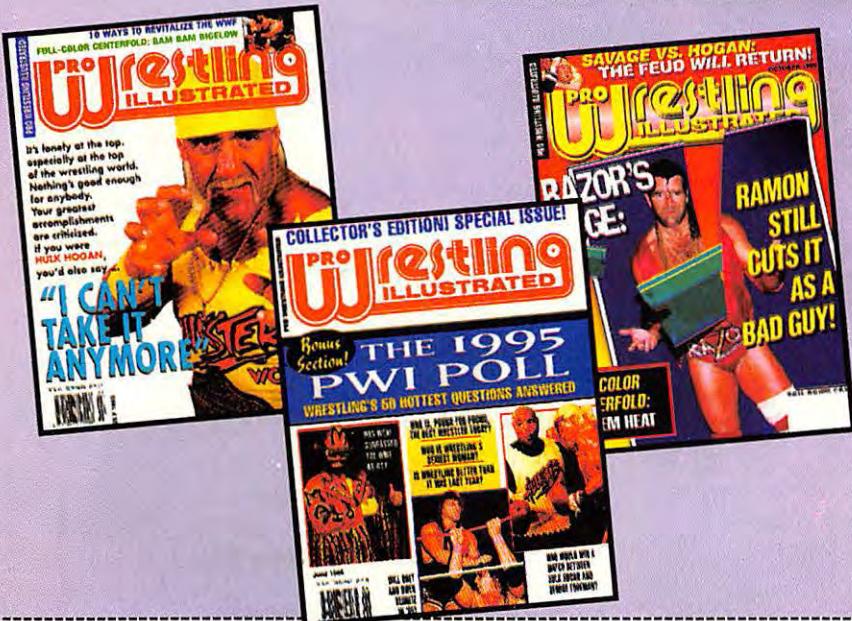
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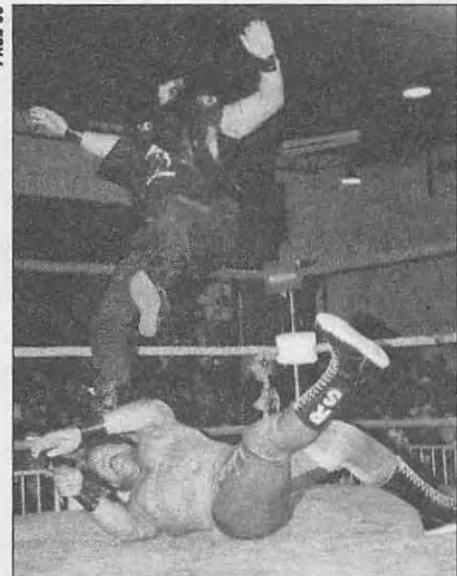
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August 6, 1996

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DECISION TIME

I hope Sting chooses Lex Luger over Hulk Hogan, because Hogan isn't worth his time or effort ("Luger Or Hogan? If Sting Makes The Wrong Choice—He's Through!").



After months of bickering, Sting still doesn't know if he can trust his regular tag team partner, Lex Luger. Some of our readers think Lex has been a good friend to him, while others say he'd be better off with Hulk Hogan.

June 1996). I think Luger has been a really good friend to Sting. Hogan, on the other hand, only wants Sting around to help him win titles. I also think Luger genuinely likes Sting, and I just hope Sting makes the right decision for himself!

MARTA CRABTREE
Jamestown, TN

I hope Sting doesn't take his decision between Lex Luger and Hulk Hogan too lightly. Sting really needs to weigh all his options before he makes a final decision, but I think he'd be better off sticking with Hogan. Luger may be a great friend socially to Sting, but Hogan has helped Sting more in his professional career. Luger has been a great friend and partner in the past, but he really hasn't helped Sting in any other way. On the other hand, Hogan has helped Sting make contacts in Hollywood that he will need if he wants to pursue an acting career someday.

The decision is definitely a difficult one, but no matter which friend the "Stinger" chooses, he will still have his fans.

ANDY STOCCARD
Omaha, NE

READERS' FEUD: PRELIM BOUT

How much longer are the readers of INSIDE WRESTLING going to be subjected to the moronic bickering between Harry Simon and the half-dozen people who actually take him seriously?

Why would anyone with half a brain even dignify Simon's ramblings about Adam Bomb and



Disco Inferno is one of the more entertaining (if not successful) wrestlers in WCW, but reader David Miller seems to feel he's hardly worth mentioning in a magazine.

Disco Inferno with responses? But people like Sterling Callaway can't be faulted entirely for believing Simon's supposed sarcasm was his honest opinion, since, for all any of us know, it could be. If people actually think guys like Hulk Hogan and The Undertaker are great wrestlers, why can't someone idolize Adam Bomb?

I feel that people like Harry Simon waste space when they write about these losers; they could be devoting their efforts toward wrestlers who really deserve it—men like Jerry Lawler and Jeff Jarrett.

If this readers' feud was aired on pay-per-view, Simon vs. Callaway would be on the "Free For All" portion before the actual show.

DAVID MILLER
San Antonio, TX

KID STUFF

I've been watching The Kid very closely for the last six months or so (about the length of time he has been managed by Ted DiBiase), and I'm not impressed at all. What happened to the humble youngster who pulled that unbelievable upset against Razor Ramon in May of 1993? That Kid had courage and heart; the Kid we're seeing now is aggressive and sloppy in his execution.

I think DiBiase is to blame. He has made Kid too aggressive. Kid is trying to become more of a brawler, and he can't win that way. Just look at his opponents before the matches start: They don't look like they're worried about the possibility of losing to Kid at all.

My advice to the youngster is to dump DiBiase and beg the fan favorites of the WWF for forgiveness. No matter what Kid thinks, I don't feel he's cut out to be a rule-breaker.

SCOTT GALLAGHER
Stockdale, CA

FEMALE FOR HIRE

I think Hulk Hogan, Sting, Lex Luger, and Randy Savage should hire Madusa to even out the odds when facing Ric Flair and his two seconds, Woman and Elizabeth. She'd be the perfect woman to watch their backs and stop the interference once and for all. I'd love to see Madusa teach those two devious women a lesson for all the trouble they have caused in WCW.

We already know Madusa is a world-class athlete, and she has proven that she can hold her own against anybody, even against men like Col. Robert Parker. Now it's time for her to put her skills to good use for good people.

STEVE FARAWELL
Roselle Park, NJ
(Continued on page 52)



Could you see Madusa accompanying Hulk Hogan to ringside? Reader Steve Farawell believes she'd make a perfect counter to Woman and Elizabeth, who interfere in a lot of Ric Flair's matches these days.

Inside Wrestling

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PUBLISHER.....Stuart M. Saks
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.....David Lenker
SENIOR EDITORBill Apter
MANAGING EDITORBrandi Mankiewicz
CREATIVE ART DIRECTOR.....Tina Filice
ART DIRECTORS.....Kim Branson
Joseph Kalman
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SENIOR WRITERS.....David Rosenbaum
Andy Rodriguez
Eddie Ellner
Steve Anderson
Bryan Ethier
PHOTO EDITORJason Ross Lavin
CONTRIBUTING EDITORSMatt Brock
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REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

By Stu Saks

In his 26 years with London Publishing, Bill Apter has seen five different men in the position of editor-in-chief and eight different men (including himself) in the position of managing editor.

"When you really think about it," the senior editor said, "that's not really a lot of change over better than a quarter-century."

That stability, in my view, has been one of the factors that has made INSIDE WRESTLING and its sister publications, *The Wrestler*, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, and *Wrestle America*, the most respected, trusted, and widely read wrestling magazines on the market. The positions of editor-in-chief and managing editor are the two most important positions with regard to the day-to-day operation of the magazines, and we are extremely discriminating when it comes to who will fill those spots.

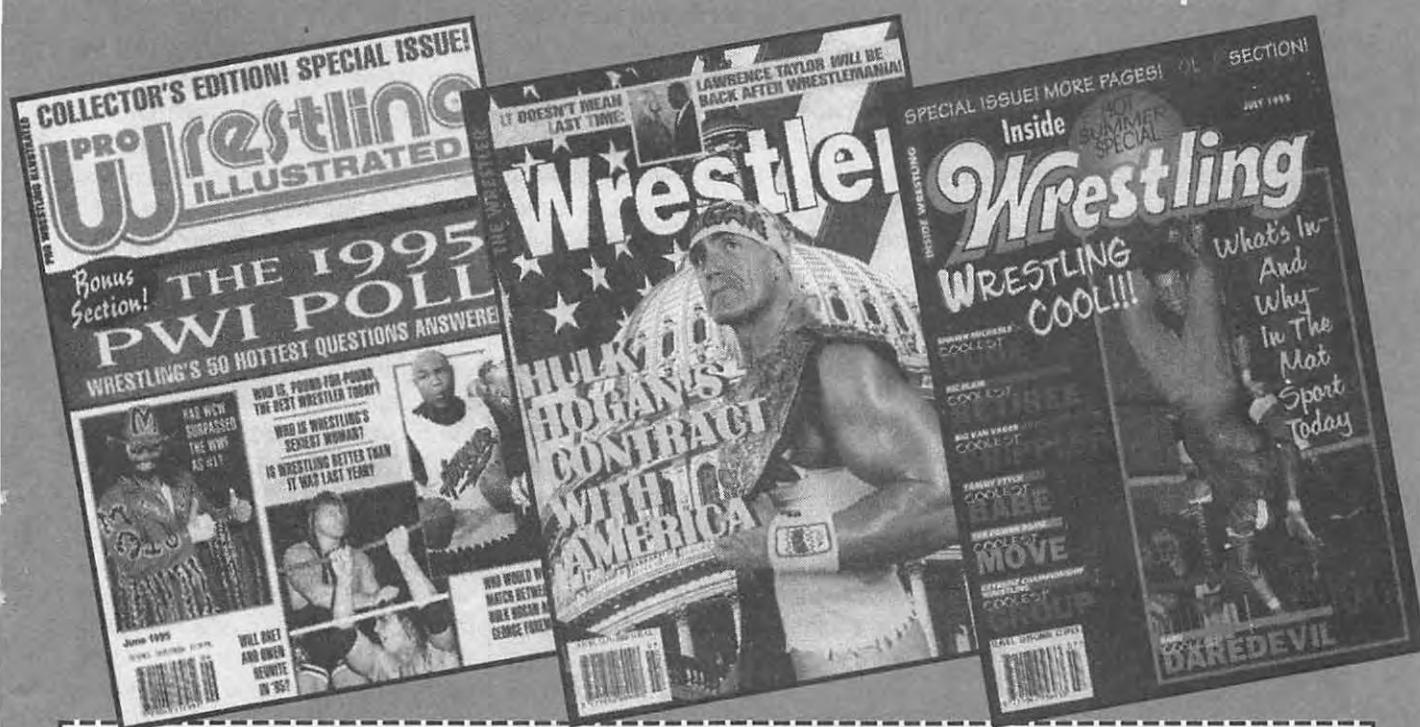
I am pleased to announce that London Publishing has named Dave Lenker as its new editor-in-chief and Brandi Mankiewicz as its new managing editor. This announcement comes with a degree of mixed emotions. While I am thoroughly convinced that Dave and Brandi will fill their new roles exceptionally well, these moves coincide with my long-time colleague, Craig Peters, being shifted to the position of director of advertising. Craig will still maintain a voice on the magazines' editorial board, but his time will be largely eaten up by his advertising duties and his editor/publisher position on *Remember*, one of the hottest titles in America today.

While I will miss Craig's daily contributions, I am excited for Dave Lenker, who climbs to this prestigious position after just three years with the company, and Brandi Mankiewicz (pronounced Man-kev-itch), the first woman managing editor in this company's long history.

"These are two of the brightest young people in the publishing business," said Apter, who is the same age as Dave and Brandi combined. "I don't think the future of these magazines could be in better hands."

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NAMES MA

DON'T REMEMBER the last time I led off this column with the news of the death of a wrestler, but right now, it's still the first thing on my mind. **Ray Stevens**, the "Blond Bomber," died of heart failure on May 3 in San Francisco. Ray was 60 years old and truly one of the greats of the sport.



RAY STEVENS

Stevens began his career in 1957 and captured six world tag team titles during his 35-year career: four times in the AWA (thrice with Nick Bockwinkel and once with Pat Patterson) and twice in the NWA (with Jimmy Snuka and Ivan Koloff).

I spoke with dozens of people in wrestling in the days immediately following Ray's death, and it was **Gary Hart** who summed up Ray best. "You won't find one person in the wrestling business who ever had anything bad to say about Ray as a wrestler or a person," Hart said. "What a great man he was. What a tragic loss for wrestling."

The big question in WCW is this: Is **Lex Luger** really afraid of **The Giant**? I can't believe he is. Something strange is going on here. We know that **Jimmy Hart** is always with The Giant, and no matter what

Luger says, he still maintains some sort of relationship with Hart. Luger not showing up for two straight World title matches against Giant is too weird. As much as I hate to think this, I can't rule out the possibility that Hart paid Luger off to keep him away from The Giant (Hart is known for throwing the cash around). I know Lex Luger very well, and I know money is the most important thing in his life. Assuming this theory is true, doesn't he think wearing the World title would be worth more than what Hart could offer?

A lot of people thought **The Ultimate Warrior** would have the Intercontinental belt around his waist by now. Truth of the matter is, **Goldust**, the current I-C champ, has been running out of the ring and getting counted out each time they battle. (See story on page 46) ... After both **The Gangstas** and **The Eliminators** sneak-attacked each other several times, ECW promoters have finally signed them to a series of bouts. The Eliminators' ECW tag belts will be on the line, but The Gangstas don't seem to care. "They

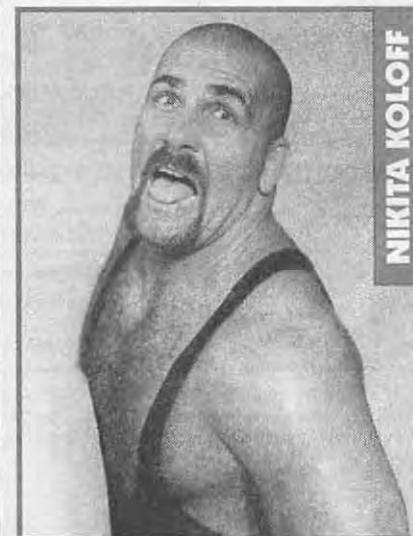


THE GANGSTAS

can keep their damn title," **New Jack** told me. "We just want to beat the crap out of 'em."

Jerry Lawler is delighted that **Big Van Vader** is competing as a fan favorite in the USWA when he's not in the WWF. "I have become such good friends with Vader that if **Bret Hart** ever has the guts to come out of hiding, I can get Vader to break Bret's neck just as a personal favor to me!" ... Several men have been wrestling as **Tiger Mask** in Japan during the last few years, and now New Japan promoters have signed the original Tiger Mask to wrestle the fourth Tiger Mask! Should be interesting.

Despite the fact that he recently appeared at a PWF charity card to sign autographs, **Nikita Koloff** wants to make it clear that he's not getting the itch to wrestle. "It warmed my heart to see how many people turned



NIKITA KOLOFF

out to greet me," Nikita said. "But running my gyms and spending time with my family is something I don't want to give up."

Yoshi Kwan is now competing in

KIN' NEWS

By Bill Apter

the USWA ... **Mabel and Mo**, a.k.a. **Men on a Mission**, are negotiating with WCW ... Congratulations to **Dusty Wolfe** and his wife, **Jenny**, on the birth of their son **Ethan Davis Wolfe** ... **Bambi**, who has held dozens of women's titles during her career, just won another: She now has the Great American Wrestling Federation women's belt strapped around her waist ... **Jushin Liger** lost



the IWGP junior heavyweight belt to **The Great Sasuke** on April 29 ... Motor City Wrestling heavyweight champion **"Punisher" Rock Stevens** barely escaped with his title after a recent defense against rookie **Roughhouse Robb**. Stevens found out exactly how Robb got his nickname in that match!

Tony Falk is now driving **Jeff Jarrett** around in a limo in the USWA. "I don't mind being a chauffeur to such a great talent," Falk said. "Whereas **Jesse James Armstrong (The Roadie)** wouldn't do this because he thought it was demeaning, I am thrilled to do anything this great wrestler and country music superstar asks of me!" Falk also won

the USWA TV title from Armstrong on May 4.

Remember **The Destruction Crew**, **Mike Enos** and **Wayne Bloom** (a.k.a. **The Beverly Brothers** in the WWF)? Well, both have been busy lately. Bloom is wrestling in Minnesota, while Enos, who had been in Japan for quite some time, is wrestling part-time in WCW. What about getting back together, guys? "We're thinking about it," said Enos. "There is so much great tag team talent in WCW right now, it would give us a chance to prove how underrated we were."

Cheetah Master regained the East Coast Wrestling Alliance heavyweight title from **Ace Darling** ... Old feuds



that never die: **Typhoon vs. Hercules** has been signed for several WWWA cards. Also, **The Honky Tonk Man** and **Virgil** will be doing battle in Las Vegas' National Wrestling Conference ... **Sam Houston** and **Charlie Norris** have formed a team in the Continental Wrestling Alliance and are feuding with **"Sicilian Studs" Vito Mussolini** and **Guido Falcone**.

The AIWF has been hosting a series of bloody battles between U.S.

champ **Jumpin' Jimmy** and challenger **Jackie Anderson** ... WCW U.S. champ **Konnan** is teaming with **Perro Aguayo** for several matches in AAA. They're battling **Cien Caras** and **Pierroth Jr.**

Fans are cheering **Sgt. Craig Pittman** in WCW, as he is now team-



ing with **Hacksaw Duggan** on occasion ... **"Diamond" Dallas Page** has been reinstated in WCW and is trying to get title matches and win back the heart of his former Diamond Doll, **Kimberly**, who is now apparently in love with **The Booty Man** ... **Debbie Combs** and **Malia Hosaka** are tearing up United Wrestling Alliance rings (not literally) with their vicious battles.

Skip was pinned by **Ahmed Johnson** on a North East Wrestling card in Newburgh, New York, in early-May, but he had his excuse ready. "I was pinned because I was angry that they would not let **Sunny** near the ring to advise me," he said. "Johnson grabbed me when I was discussing a matter with the referee. This man you think is so great and honorable is a cheat!"

That's all for now. I'll see you at the matches! □

THE PLANE TOUCHED down at the airport in Tokyo, Japan, and the first thing that came to my mind was, *What if Matt's wrong? What if nobody can speak English?*, followed by, *What if Matt's right? What if Tokyo is hell on earth?*

Matt Brock, INSIDE WRESTLING's senior columnist, has never liked Japan, as you might know, because it brings back memories of "bad times during the big one, World War II," as Matt says. That's why when Matt refused an assignment to Tokyo for a New Japan card at the Tokyo Dome, my hand immediately shot up for the assignment. Hey, how many chances do you get to go to Japan on the house?

Of course, the biggest problem with being a journalist is you always travel alone. But I decided to overcome my concerns and take "On The Road" on the airplane.

The thing was, I didn't want to make this an ordinary "journalist covers card and comes home" trip. I wanted to get around, see the sights, talk to the wrestlers and the fans, and most of all, find out how the other half of the wrestling world lives.

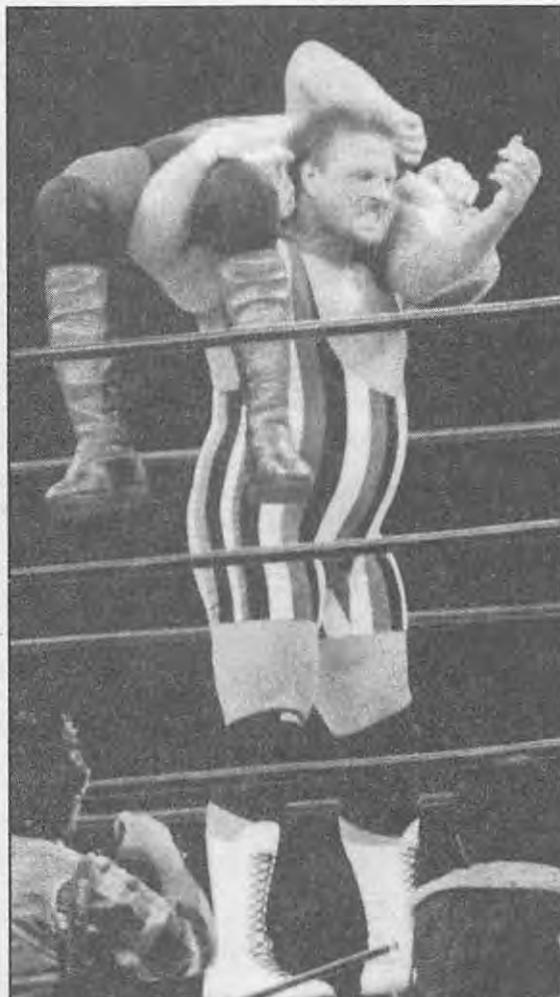
The wrestlers on this New Japan card were mostly Japanese, with a handful of North Americans thrown in: Randy Savage, Lex Luger, The Road Warriors, the Steiners, and Scott Norton. Most of the names on the card you probably know: Riki Choshu, The Great Sasuke, Jushin Liger, Kensuke Sasaki, The Great Muta, Genichiro Tenryu, Shinya Hashimoto, and Nobuhiko Takada are the most familiar ones.

But to an American who had never visited Japan, the entire experience was foreign.

I got off the plane and immediately followed the rest of the passengers through the passport check and then to the baggage check. After that, it was through customs, where I feared the agent would open my bag and

ON THE ROAD

With Dave Lenker



Though he has had some success as a WCW part-timer, Scott Norton is better known to wrestling fans in Japan than those in the U.S. He knows Tokyo well enough to help a misguided reporter find that city's wrestling hot spots, too.

walk around town in search of Chun-Hi-Wing. Fat chance. With its suffocating traffic and busy sidewalks, Tokyo is one of the most intimidating cities on the planet. There must be a million storefront businesses in this town and even more sidewalk vendors. I walked and

expose five months worth of wrestling magazines (Muta wanted them). Then I caught the express bus to my hotel, checked in, took a shower, changed, and decided to take a stroll around town.

You might not believe this, but maybe there's some kind of magnet that attracts wrestling people to wrestling people. The first person I ran into was Scott Norton, who happened to be staying in the same hotel. This wasn't exactly what I wanted, but then I figured that maybe Norton could show me around town.

"Where do the wrestlers hang out?" I asked him.

"At the sushi bar," he joked. "It's right down the street."

"Okay, thanks," I said.

Then he started laughing uncontrollably, and I realized he was joking. Of course, not many wrestlers hang out at sushi bars and, besides, there must be a thousand of those kind of places in Tokyo (I would've checked for myself, but I couldn't read the Tokyo phone book).

"Sure," I said, "and they're singing karaoke."

Norton said the American wrestlers usually hang out in the hotel restaurant and bar, while the Japanese wrestlers don't have any particular hangout. But he suggested that the next day I check out a wrestling club in downtown Tokyo called Chun-Hi-Wing Athletic Club.

"It's located behind a bunch of warehouses," he said. "You'll never find it unless you ask. The place is unbelievable. You'll see why I sent you."

The next morning, I got up early, had breakfast (no sushi, thanks), and decided to take a

(Continued on page 54)

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5. Taz vs. Dean Malenko
6. Taz vs. Steve Richards
7. Taz + Sabu vs. Chris Benoit + Dean Malenko 5 stars Public Enemy run in
8. Taz + 911 vs. Oriental Connection
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6. Taz vs. Pitbull #1 (dog collar match) bloody
7. Taz + Sabu vs. Pitbulls
8. Taz vs. Chris Benoit
9. Taz + Sabu vs. Malenko Brothers
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Behind the Dressing Room Door

by David Rosenbaum

WRESTLING IS THE perfect sport for excuses. It's the only sport in which you can win, but not really win. In any other sport, if you win the game, you win the game. Win the championship series and you're the champion. But not in wrestling. Win the wrong way and you're right back where you started: a contender begging for more shots at the championship.

That's what happened when The Ultimate Warrior defeated WWF Intercontinental champion Goldust by countout at *In Your House VII*. A spokesman for the Warrior said it makes no sense that the Warrior clearly won the match, yet didn't get a rematch. The next pay-per-view I-C title shot went to The Undertaker.

Actually, it makes a lot of sense, which is why the Warrior heads my first installment of the new occasional feature, "Why me?" It's a celebration of whining.

NEWS ITEM: The Ultimate Warrior beats I-C champion Goldust by countout. The Undertaker gets the next major shot at Goldust. "It's not fair," whines Warrior.

WHY IT'S FAIR: The Under-

taker was WWF World champion more recently than the Warrior, who hardly has any right to complain about unfairness considering he only recently came back to the federation after an absence of 3½ years and immediately was placed high on the list of contenders. Anybody else would have been forced to work his way up from the bottom. Besides, The Undertaker rarely loses. Besides, The Ultimate Warrior shouldn't have clotheslined Goldust over the rope at *In Your House*, then simply stood there and watched as he fled back to the dressing room.

And besides, it didn't come as any surprise to the Warrior that he didn't win the belt on a countout. It's in the rules and one of the ridiculous privileges that goes along with being champion. Coming close doesn't mean you get another shot. It's like athletes always say: You'd better take advantage of every opportunity, because you never know for sure when or if you'll get another one.

REMEDIY: The Warrior should shut up, stop whining, and keep winning.

NEWS ITEM: Ric Flair loses the WCW World title to The Giant in an impromptu match at *WCW Monday Nitro* on April 22. On second thought, Flair complains, he shouldn't have accepted The Giant's challenge.

WHY IT'S FAIR: Flair's right—he shouldn't have accepted The Giant's challenge. But he

did, which was his mistake alone. Flair, who's been in the sport for 24 years, should know better than to let his emotions get the better of his intelligence. Since he took the challenge, it was his job to be ready for it. If he didn't want to wrestle The Giant, he shouldn't have. Nobody forced him into it.

REMEDIY: Another choke-slam by The Giant, this time on a cement floor, would keep Flair from ever again making such

(Continued on page 55)



The Ultimate Warrior had no right to whine when he didn't receive another shot at the Intercontinental title after he beat Goldust by countout at *In Your House VII*. Make the most of your chances, Warrior, says Rosenbaum.

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the Insider

by Eddie Ellner

(The opinions expressed in "The Insider" are those of Eddie Ellner alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of anyone else on the staff of this magazine.)

BILL APTER, WHO sometimes needs help interpreting the day's events, recently asked me what I saw as the difference between Curt Hennig now and Curt Hennig of, say, five years ago. He punctuated the question with that usual dome-topped stare

that makes you feel like he's already forgotten what he asked, but this time he apparently hadn't forgotten.

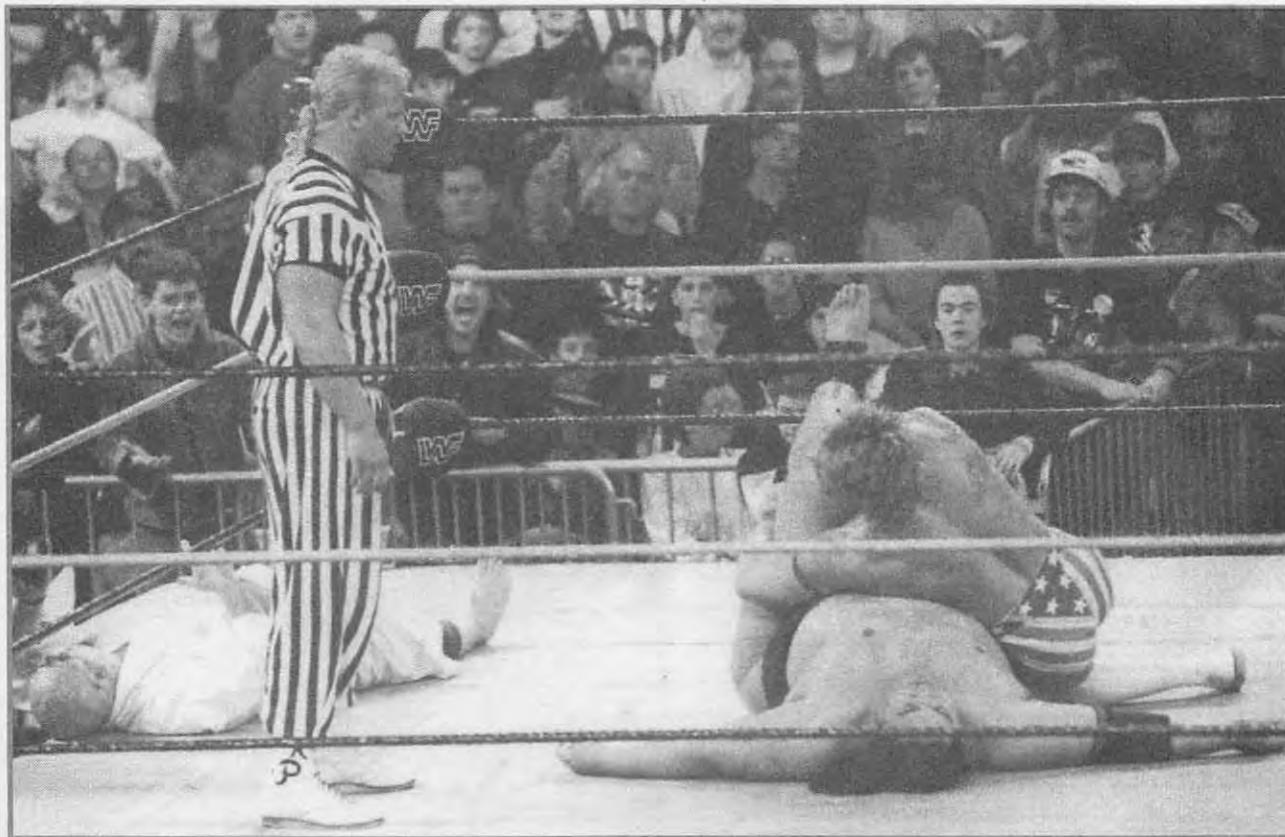
"I mean, besides the fact that he used to stand inside the ring and now he's standing outside the ring," Apter said.

I tried to explain to Apter that there was no other difference and that, when you get right down to it, Hennig might be revolutionizing the way matches are officiated by standing outside the ring.

"How can he do that?" Apter asked, at which time I concluded the conversation by returning to my pennis with garlic and herb sauce. Apter has a way of spoiling even the healthiest lunch. When lunch ended, I decided to make a phone call.

Usually, Curt Hennig is one of the best interview subjects in this or any sport. He's bright, insightful, humorous, and doesn't give rote answers, even to rote questions (which Apter often asks). Ask "Mr. Perfect" a question and he might hesitate for a few seconds before answering, as if he's actually considering the answer. He always tries to give an intelligent answer, unlike some wrestlers who answer every question with "such and such running wild on you" and "I'm just taking it one match at a time."

On this day and during this
(Continued on page 56)



If Curt Hennig can't wrestle, I'd advise him to become a full-time referee. We all know he did a great job in the Yokozuna-Lex Luger match at WrestleMania X, and he was brilliant in his role as an outside-the-ring ref recently.



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ON

Assignment

By Liz Hunter

THOUSANDS OF YEARS ago, according to Greek mythology, the first Olympics were held in Athens, Greece. The pleasant idea behind the whole thing was for rival countries to put aside their wars and other non-

In civilized modern society, however, the Olympic spirit wanes as frequently as the Olympic flame, which had a mishap recently and was run over by a bicycle on the Tacoma Bridge. Out went the old flame, in came the new

surprising that the WWF and WCW failed to get together for the World Wrestling Peace Festival on June 1 at the Los Angeles Sports Arena. The card was scheduled to feature wrestlers from the U.S., Mexico, Japan, and UFC, but none currently under contract to the WWF and only six who could be labeled full-time WCW wrestlers (Sting, The Giant, Chris Benoit, Sgt. Craig Pittman, Lex Luger, and Alex Wright).

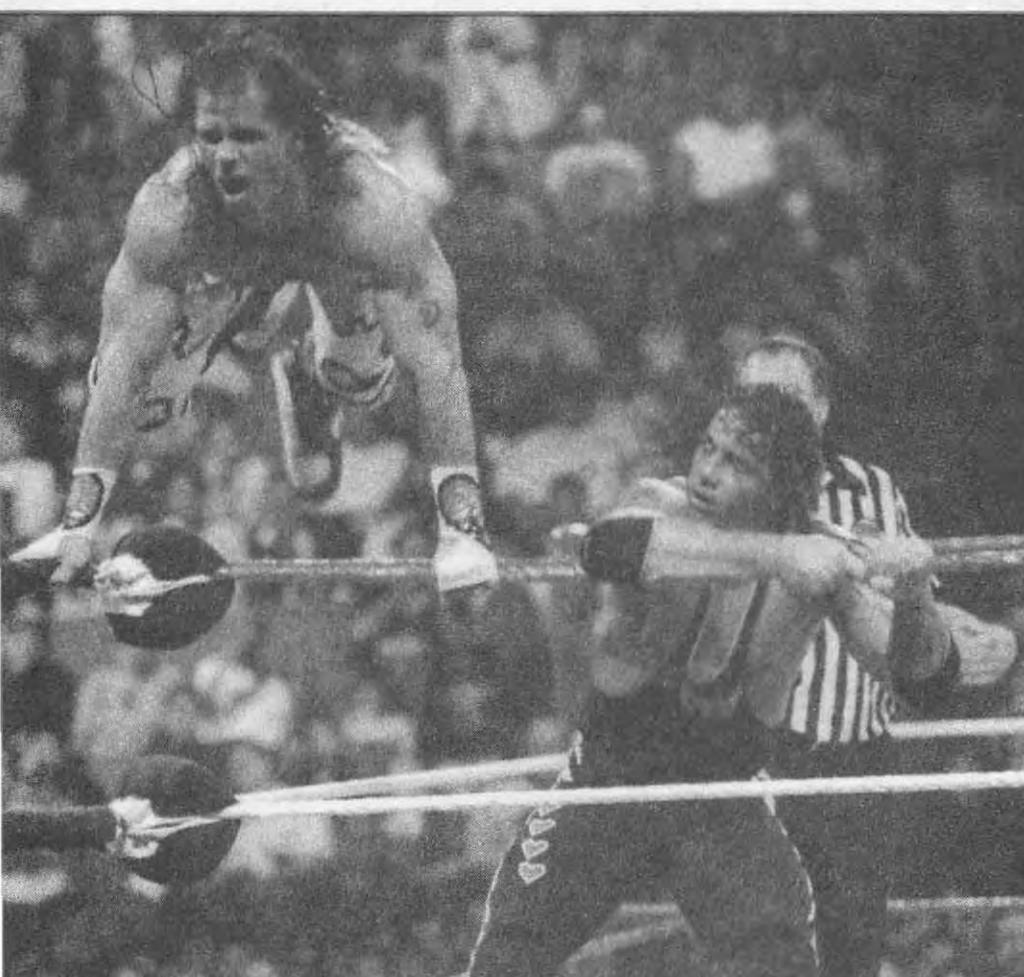
My sources tell me that the tension between the WWF and WCW is so intense that there was little chance from the beginning that the two would have agreed to have representatives on the same card.

"Each side was just waiting for the other to drop out first, so they would look like the good guys," one source said. "There's just too much going on right now for these two groups to agree to work together on anything."

But perhaps participating in the World Peace Festival together would have been good for the WWF and WCW, not to mention the sport and all involved. As Antonio Inoki, who helped orga-

nize the card, said: "We will bring together so many wrestlers from so many different parts of the world. The fans will see an event of a lifetime. There are so many different styles represented. This will be good for wrestling for all

(Continued on page 58)



Contrary to the original belief of the event's promoters, the WWF would not send representatives to the World Peace Festival. Presumably, world peace cannot include a truce in the World War between the two largest federations in North America.

sense for two weeks of manly fun (back then, the idea of having female athletes compete, too, was even less welcome than the idea of female wrestlers on a WCW card is now). That's how the Olympics were born and, so you might think, the Olympic spirit.

flame. As for the Olympic spirit, the United States boycotted the Games in 1980, and the Soviet Union returned the favor four years later when they were held in Los Angeles. More often than not, the Olympics is used as political tool.

Keeping that in mind, it's not

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Stan Hansen won the AWA World title by defeating which champion?

- 1) Rick Martel
- 2) Nick Bockwinkel
- 3) Curt Hennig
- 4) Verne Gagne

The largest crowd ever to witness a pro wrestling show (190,000) was in what city?

- 1) London, England
- 2) Toronto, Ontario
- 3) Pyongyang, North Korea
- 4) Tokyo, Japan

True or False: Hulk Hogan is the only wrestler to appear on the cover of Sports Illustrated

- 1) True
- 2) False

Which of the following cities did NOT host a portion of WrestleMania II?

- 1) Chicago, Illinois
- 2) Atlantic City, New Jersey
- 3) Uniondale, New York
- 4) Los Angeles, California

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INSIDE WRESTLING

CAPSULE PROFILE

244

RICK AND SCOTT STEINER

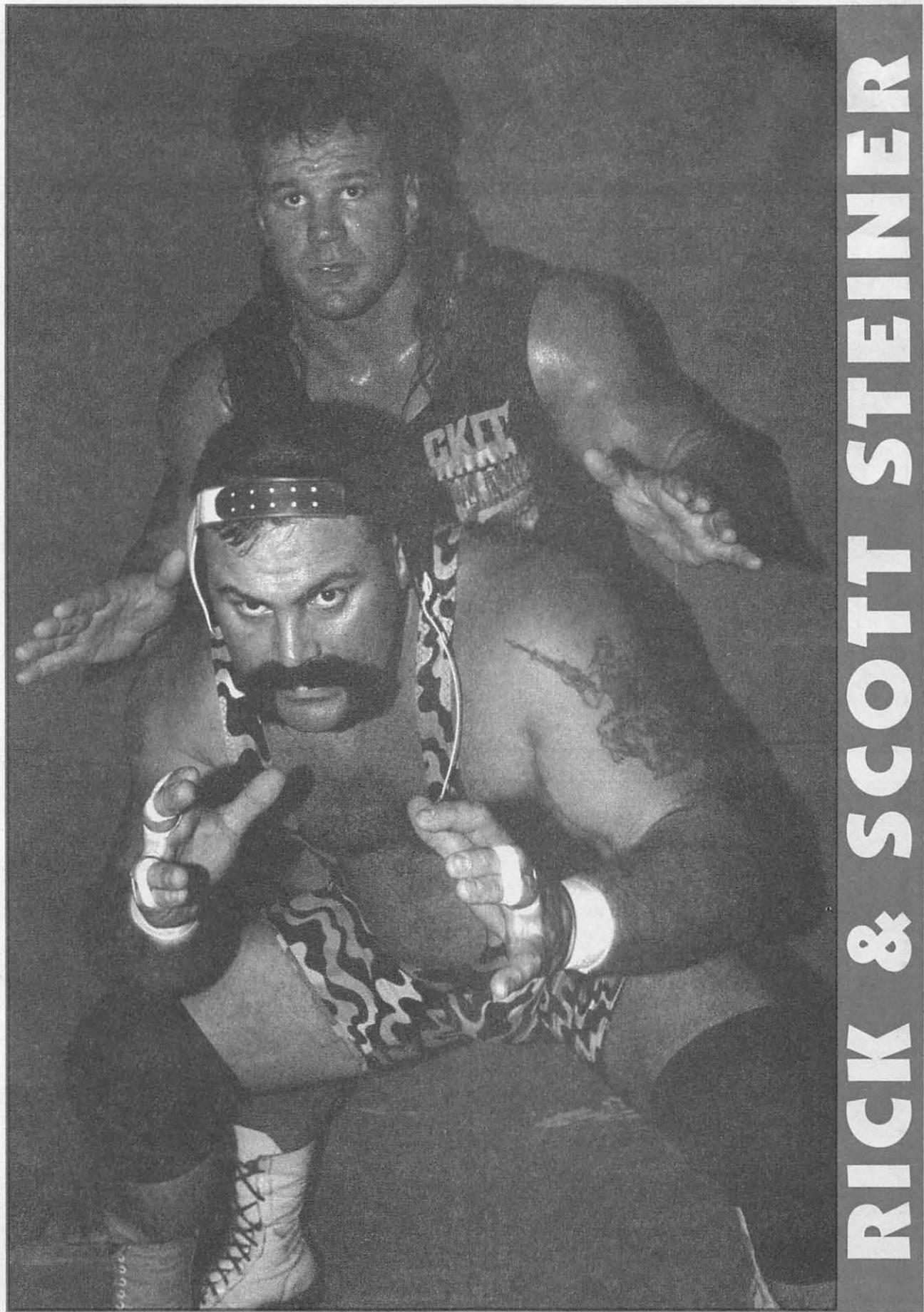
THE WCW TAG team picture got more interesting this winter when Rick and Scott Steiner finally left Japan to pursue a fourth NWA/WCW World tag team title. They're now feuding with The Road Warriors, but their ultimate goal is to strap on those tag belts ("That's why we came back—to prove again that we're the best") ... Both were

amateur standouts at the University of Michigan before turning pro (Rick in 1983, Scott in '86) ... Rick teamed with Sting to win the UWF tag title in 1987 and later joined Kevin Sullivan's NWA Varsity Club ("You gotta look at all your options when you're young") ... Had a lot of success after he began feuding with former Varsity ally Mike Rotundo, from whom he won the NWA TV title ... Scott was third runner-up in PWI Rookie of the Year balloting for 1988 before he began teaming with his brother ... Under the guidance of Missy Hyatt, they beat Sullivan and Rotundo at The Great American Bash on July 23, 1989, then won their first NWA World tag title by beating Michael Hayes and Jim Garvin three months later ("The first is always the sweetest!") ... Eventually lost the belts to Doom—Ron Simmons and Butch Reed—and had a long feud with them ... Won the NWA U.S. tag title from The Midnight Express in August, then got into an unusual feud with The Nasty Boys in which the Nastys repeatedly sneak-attacked them ("Those two couldn't handle the fact that we were always better than them") ... Won their second NWA/WCW World tag title by beating The Freebirds in February 1991 (thus they had to give up

the U.S. belts) and, one month later, won the IWGP tag belts from Hiroshi Hase and Kensuke Sasaki ("You can never have enough gold belts") ... That spring, though, Scott suffered a serious bicep injury and the Steiners were stripped of the WCW title in July ... One of Rick's more interesting matches while Scott was out pitted him and Missy against Paul E. Dangerously and Arn Anderson ("Real world-class competition") ... The brothers won their third WCW World tag title by beating Anderson and Bobby Eaton in May 1992 ... Lost the belts to Steve Williams and Terry Gordy ... The Steiners' WWF career began in December of that year ("We needed a change") ... Dominated mid-level foes and soon got a series of title shots against Money Inc. ... The two teams traded the WWF belts three times in six days in June, with Rick and Scott coming away with them in the end ("The cream always rises!") ... Lost the belts to The Quebecers in September 1993 in a bizarre match contested under "Province Of Quebec" rules. They stipulated that the title could change hands on a countout or disqualification; the Steiners were disqualified when Scott was caught using a hockey stick Johnny Polo had thrown into the ring ("We're not sure those rules really exist") ... Left the WWF shortly thereafter and, save for a short stint in ECW in 1995, spent most of the next two years in the Orient ... Look for them to win that fourth WCW title by year's end ("We guarantee it!"). □



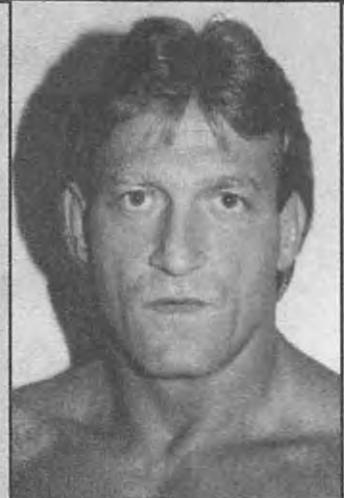
There aren't many teams that work together as well as Rick and Scott Steiner do. The brothers from Michigan wrestled in Japan for two years before returning to the U.S. late in '95. They're pursuing a fourth WCW tag title.



RICK & SCOTT STEINER

Where Are They Now?

Do you have a favorite wrestler who has left your area? Are you wondering where he is today? Then this special column is just for you. Each month we will update the whereabouts of four current or former wrestlers



PAUL ORNDORFF

Orndorff originally expected to be recovered from a neck injury he suffered at the hands of Ric Flair, Brian Pillman, and Arn Anderson on December 11 by now, but it hasn't happened. He had neck surgery after the attack, but doctors say he isn't ready to

return yet. That doesn't mean he has forgotten what happened or forgiven the perpetrators. "I'm still undergoing physical therapy," he said, "but when I'm healthy, I'll see to it that there are no Horsemen left standing!"



MARK LEWIN

Lewin and his good friend Don Curtis formed a very popular and successful tag team in the late-1950s and early-1960s, but Lewin's popularity didn't last. After many years of battling evil men such as The Sheik, Lewin split with Curtis

and turned to the dark side himself and became a rulebreaker known as The Purple Haze. Lewin no longer wrestles, but he is involved in the sport. He moved to Singapore a few years ago and is now promoting wrestling cards there.



JIM DEL RAY

Del Ray and Tom Prichard—The Heavily Bodies—were the Smoky Mountain tag team champs at the time of that federation's demise last November, but shortly after SMW went under, Del Ray moved on to ECW and wrestled there for several months. The reason you

haven't seen him recently is that he is home in Florida recovering from knee surgery and rehabilitating a shoulder that has been bothering him for some time. "I'll be raisin' hell somewhere real soon," he said.



RON SIMMONS

Although you haven't seen him in a major federation in quite some time, Simmons is still an active wrestler. He has been competing regularly in a number of promotions in the Deep South and is very happy to be doing so. "There are lots of

young kids down here who think they're the hottest thing going," the former WCW World champ said. "I'm in the best condition of my life, and I give these guys a dose of reality when they get in the ring with me."

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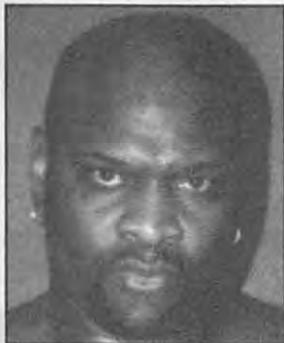
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NEWS FROM THE

NEWBURGH, NY
BY TIMOTHY A. WALKER



AHMED JOHNSON
VS.
SKIP



Two WWF stars clashed on a North East Wrestling card on this night, and Skip made a mistake early by challenging Johnson to a test of strength. Ahmed won that and dominated the match for a few minutes. Skip, however, took over when he backed Ahmed into a corner and kicked and choked him. Jimmy Shoulders, Skip's second, helped by choking Ahmed on the ropes when the referee was distracted. Eventually, Johnson got angry and began his comeback. After clotheslining and bodyslamming Skip, he finished him off with his "Pearl River Plunge."

OTHER BOUTS: Ralph Lemieux beat J.L. Storm ... Doink the Clown beat Justin St. John (with Eddie Reality) ... Half Nelson beat Tiny the Terrible ... Johnny Handsome defeated Super Nova ... Abbudah Singh (with Eddie Reality) wrestled to a no-contest with Tony DiVito ... Bam Bam Bigelow & Fatu wrestled to a double-countout with Sinister Caine & Primo Carnera III.

LAKELAND, FL
BY GARY SERETTA



THE GIANT
VS.
HACKSAW DUGGAN



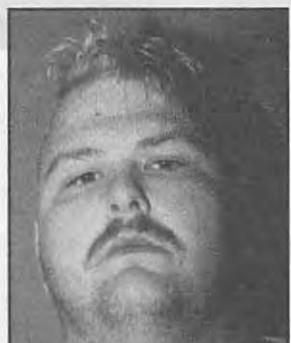
Even though he had been soundly defeated by The Giant several times in the past, Duggan did not appear intimidated by the 7'4" WCW World champion. In fact, buoyed by the cheers of the fans, he was the aggressor when the bell rang. He went right at The Giant and tried to pound him with blows to the face and chest. The Giant appeared shaken by this early attack, but he remained on his feet the whole time. But when Duggan came charging at him a few minutes later, the champion easily knocked him to the mat. Duggan tried to mount a comeback during the next few minutes, but the big man was too overpowering. He pinned Duggan after a thundering choke-slam.

OTHER BOUTS: The Booty Man defeated V.K. Wall Street ... Shark wrestled to a double-countout with Dick Slater ... Madusa defeated Col. Robert Parker ... The Nasty Boys defeated Public Enemy ... WCW U.S. champion Konnan beat Eddy Guerrero ... Sting defeated Ric Flair.

YARDVILLE, NJ
BY ED MARKLEY



ABBUDAH SINGH
VS.
IAN ROTTEN



This barbed-wire baseball bat match started with a bang when Rotten kayed Angel, Singh's valet, with the bat before the match. Both combatants were bloodied within minutes after tearing into each other with the barbed wire. Singh ripped into Rotten's arm with the wire, but lost control of the bat after missing with a top-rope splash. Soon Ian was tearing into Singh's arm. After a while, the two men used a fork and a chair to batter each other. Rotten connected with a modified piledriver, then Singh later nailed him with a splash off the second rope. The match was declared a no-contest after both men DDT'd the referee.

OTHER BOUTS: Derek Domino beat Madman Pondo ... The Inferno Kid & Ralph Soto beat Adrian Hall & Twiggy Ramirez ... Rick Ratchet beat Boogie Woogie Brown ... Tommy Cairo beat D-Lo Brown ... Reckless Youth beat The Inferno Kid ... Tracey Smothers wrestled to a double-countout with Ace Darling ... Bad Attitude beat The Lost Boys.

WRESTLING CAPITALS

TOKYO, JAPAN
BY KOICHI YOSHIZAWA



THE GREAT MUTA VS. HAKUSHI



Hakushi wrestled under the name Ginsei Shinsaki on this New Japan card, but it didn't matter what name he used—he still got pounded. Actually, the match was very competitive. Both men used a variety of aerial moves and got several two-counts. Muta opened up a large cut on Shinsaki's face early in the match, but the former WWF star kept on fighting. Finally, after spewing a strange mist into Shinsaki's face, Muta executed a moonsault and got the pin.

OTHER BOUTS: Tokimitsu Ishizawa & Yuji Nagata beat Koji Kanemoto & Shinjiro Otani ... Riki Choshu, Takashi Izuka, Osamu Nishimura, & Satoshi Kojima beat Shiro Koshinaka, Tatsutoshi Goto, Kuniaki Kobayashi, & Akira Nogami ... The Great Sasuke beat Jushin Liger ... Randy Savage beat Hiroyoshi Tenza ... Masa Chono defeated Lex Luger ... The Road Warriors & Kensuke Sasaki beat Rick & Scott Steiner & Scott Norton ... Genichiro Tenryu beat Tatsumi Fujinami ... Shinya Hashimoto defeated Nobuhiko Takada.

PHILADELPHIA, PA
BY TONY WATSON



RAVEN VS. SHANE DOUGLAS



Douglas wasted no time going after the ECW champ; he leaped over the top rope and onto him immediately after the bell rang. Soon afterward, he tried a sleeper, but Raven broke out of that. After the two men brawled in the crowd for a while, Douglas executed a belly-to-belly suplex. Unfortunately for "The Franchise," Stevie Richards, The Blue Meanie, and The Bruise Brothers soon interfered. Douglas tried both a half-Boston crab and a figure-four on Raven, but was unable to keep either hold on amidst the interference. Just after Shane used a belly-to-belly suplex on the Bruises' Ron Harris, Raven hit him with his loaded boot and pinned him.

OTHER BOUTS: Mikey Whipwreck pinned Billy Black ... The Pit Bulls wrestled D-Von & Bubba Ray Dudley to a no-contest ... Taz beat Devon Storm by countout ... Axl Rotten beat Little Guido ... 2 Cold Scorpio & The Sandman defeated The Bruise Brothers ... Brian Lee beat Tommy Dreamer ... Sabu pinned Rob Van Dam.

HALLE, GERMANY
BY HANS SPIEGEL



BRET HART VS. OWEN HART



Just when everyone started to think maybe the Hart family feud was over, these two clashed again in a very heated match on the WWF's tour of Germany. Owen taunted his brother before the match, and he paid for it later. And though Owen kept Bret on the defensive for a while and connected with a few dropkicks, "The Hitman" was the man to shine in the end. After wearing down Owen's legs, he clamped on the "sharpshooter" and won by submission.

OTHER BOUTS: Jake Roberts pinned Isaac Yankem ... Savio Vega beat Steve Austin by disqualification ... The Bushwhackers beat Justin Bradshaw & Leif Cassidy ... Razor Ramon pinned The Kid ... WWF World tag team champs Skip & Zip beat Henry & Phineas Godwinn ... Ahmed Johnson beat Davey Boy Smith by disqualification in an arm-wrestling match ... The Undertaker pinned Diesel ... WWF World champ Shawn Michaels pinned Hunter Hearst Helmsley.



Matt Brock's Plain Speaking

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

Talk about being in the wrong place at the wrong time. The old reporter's instinct failed me when I decided not to go to Albany, Georgia, for a *Monday Nitro* broadcast and taping. Talked things over with Stu Saks and we decided to take a chance that nothing *really* important would happen. Should've known

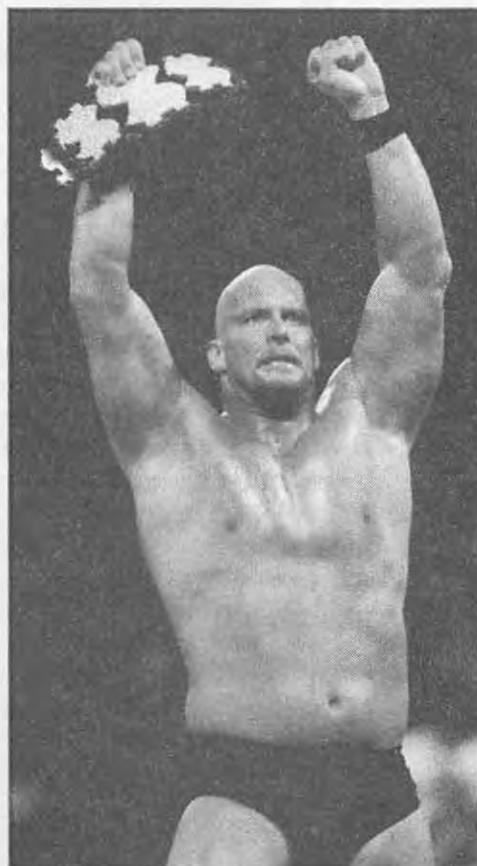
when Saks agreed with me that it was a bad decision. Stayed home and got a sick feeling in my stomach when The Giant challenged Flair on *Nitro*. This being a TV taping, I knew the rest of the card wouldn't be shown until the following week, but here was Giant vs. Flair going on as I sit there, and there was no way I could see it. Got woken up the next morning by a phone call from one of our correspondents who went to the matches. "Matt, what you are doing home? I was wondering why you weren't there," the man said. At this point, the journalistic instincts didn't fail me, and I knew something important had happened. By now you know that The Giant beat Flair with a choke-slam and became the first rookie to win a world heavyweight title. Yours truly wasn't there. Unfortunately that doesn't mean it didn't happen. The next phone call was from Saks, who sputtered the brilliant remark, "Matt, it's Stu, I guess you should've gone." Now we know why he gets paid the big bucks. Fortunately, this is the information age, so I hung up on Saks and called Flair at his room in Albany. No surprise—he wasn't there. My next call was to The Giant. Also not there. So I called Jimmy Hart, The Giant's manager. "Matt! You missed wrestling history!" Hart screamed. No kidding, but the point of this phone call was to get details, which Hart

finally supplied. The way it went, Flair had The Giant in a figure-four leglock, which is quickly becoming the lamest submission hold in the game, when The Giant broke it and choke-slammed Flair. "Flair couldn't believe it was happening!" Hart said. "I guess you'll see a replay!" Sadder words have never been spoken.

NEW YORK, NY

Sometimes nothing important happens at a pay-per-view show, but this wasn't one of those times. The WWF held *In Your House VII* here tonight, and on the card was The Ultimate Warrior vs. Goldust, Big Van Vader vs. Razor Ramon, and Shawn Michaels vs. Diesel. Didn't want to make the same mistake twice, so I showed up for the undercard and saw Steve Austin lose to Savio Vega by pinfall, which is bad news if you're Austin and hoping to get your

OMAHA, NE

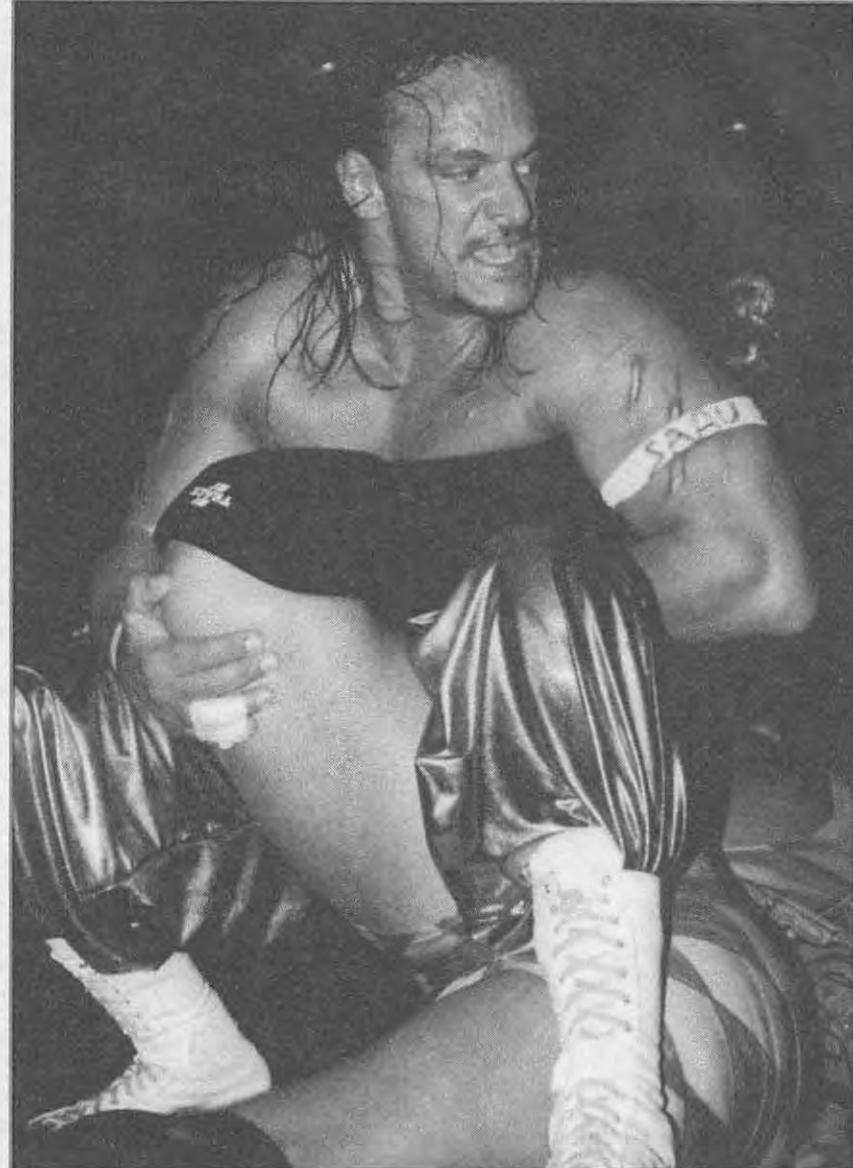


STEVE AUSTIN

career going in the right direction again. Not that there's anything wrong with Vega, but if Austin plans on going somewhere, these are the matches he'll have to win. Austin was down after this one, and it's hard to blame him. A lot of people used to think Austin had a right to complain about mistreatment by WCW, a federation that always seemed to overlook him, but Austin has nobody to blame but himself for anything that happens in the WWF from here on. As for the main card, Warrior beat Goldust and should have the Intercontinental belt before long (provided The Undertaker doesn't get it first), Vader pinned Ramon, and Michaels put the finishing touches on Diesel in brilliant fashion in a no-holds-barred match. It's starting to look like Michaels might have the belt for a long time. Bruno's record of nearly eight years is safe, but don't be surprised if Michaels' reign is measured in years instead of months. By the way, Diesel should be banned from every federation for what he did to Mad Dog Vachon. I won't dignify it by giving you a play-by-play.

Somebody somewhere must have told a story about a poor man who gets rich and moves into a mansion, then decides he'd rather live in the gutter after all. ECW is no wrestling gutter, but it's certainly no mansion compared to WCW, and Sabu seems to like it better there, though, and I can understand his thinking. A lot of people thought Sabu was getting his big break when he signed with WCW last fall, but Sabu didn't see it that way and is wrestling regularly in ECW again. It's hard to blame him. The wrestling is more to his liking, the fans love him, and they even have a \$20 T-shirt with his like-

PHILADELPHIA, PA



SABU

ness on it. Must be something about a place where everybody knows your name. Here's one wrestler who prefers the simpler things in life. The question is, will Sabu regret it when his wrestling days are over? You know that when a man wrestles as recklessly as Sabu, retirement can't be far off.

Re: questions about Mabel asked in last month's column. He's back to wrestling tag teams with Mo and slipping in the USWA ratings. I'm not the only one who thinks Mabel might be a fly-by-nighter. Jerry

Lawler thinks so, too, although all he would do is nod his agreement when I asked him the question. Asked to actually mouth a comment, Lawler said, "I'm not going on record saying anything about anybody." Amazing, considering that Lawler says everything about everyone on WWF telecasts. A few hours later, I ran into Mabel. He was looking kind of angry, and I was thankful the August 1996 issue of INSIDE WRESTLING hadn't hit the newsstands yet. □

MEMPHIS, TN

TICK...

Lawler tries to put his part-time friend/part-time enemy away with a sleeper. The first match these two had in April in Memphis was a friendly one; now their feud may be on the verge of crossing over into the WWF.

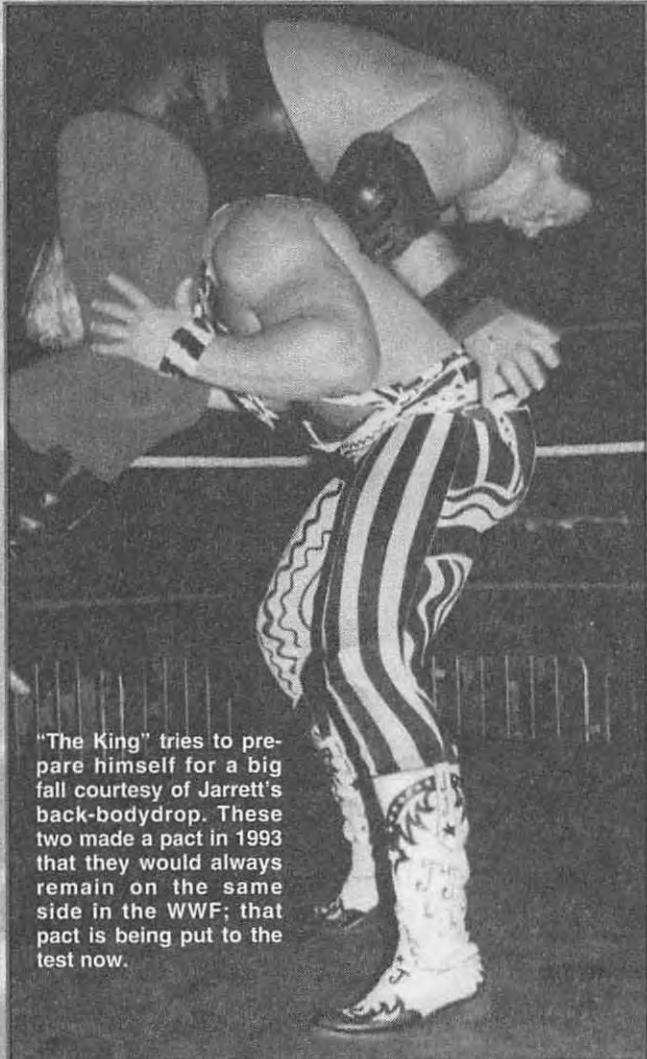
TICK...

Photos by
Erick Anderson

TICK...

THE LAWLER-JARRETT TIME BOMB IS ABOUT TO

Friends? Enemies? Both? What's the best way to describe the Jeff Jarrett-Jerry Lawler relationship? They're not getting along in Memphis now, and if they don't settle their differences soon, this could be WWF Feud of the Year!



"The King" tries to prepare himself for a big fall courtesy of Jarrett's back-bodydrop. These two made a pact in 1993 that they would always remain on the same side in the WWF; that pact is being put to the test now.

By Bryan Ethier

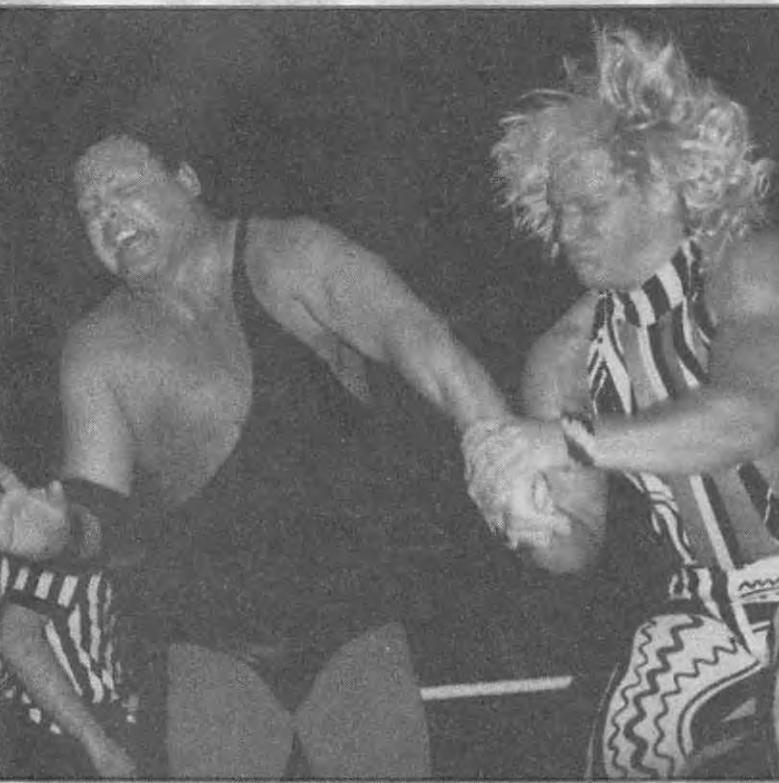
THEY EXCHANGED NOT a drop of blood, nor did they share a handshake, a hug, or sign a written contract. The pact forged between Jerry Lawler and Jeff Jarrett was created not in the solitude provided by an undulating Tennessee meadow, but in a smelly, claustrophobic rope-enclosed box called a wrestling ring.

As the backdrop for such a profound and far-reaching agreement, a wrestling ring may lack the warmth and charm upon which two men would prefer to build an alliance. Yet, in light of the terms of their bond, it seems fitting: "We will forever, as one, stand against the WWF and their ignorant fans and pitiful wrestlers."

Thus, the Jarrett-Lawler pact was born in a cloud of sweat and ratified before an arena of ogling fans. On the very first day both men appeared in the WWF together, they promised that no matter what happened between them in the USWA, they would remain allies in the WWF. It is a treaty based on survival!

"We have to do what we have to do," Lawler clarified after a USWA match. "Here in the USWA, we've always been *the kings*. But in the WWF, we get rejected by the fans. Who cares about those people? The fans there are morons, and the people they cheer for are even more pathetic. Only 'The King' and 'Double-J' have a true understanding of that federation. And that's why our alliance there is so strong. If we didn't have each other, we'd

EXPLODE!



have no one in the WWF."

But how long can these proud, intense men remain on the same page? Can hatred for something as intangible as an organization's image remain an anchor for two grapplers driven to achieve superiority over their peers?

That question may have been partially answered after these two "friends" faced each other in a series of USWA matches this spring. The first battle occurred April 15, when Jarrett and Lawler tugged, tossed, piledriven, elbowed, and somersaulted like jealous siblings for 60 minutes before their match was declared a draw. It was Jarrett's first since he suffered a serious back injury in February and the first of several hour-long matches they had.

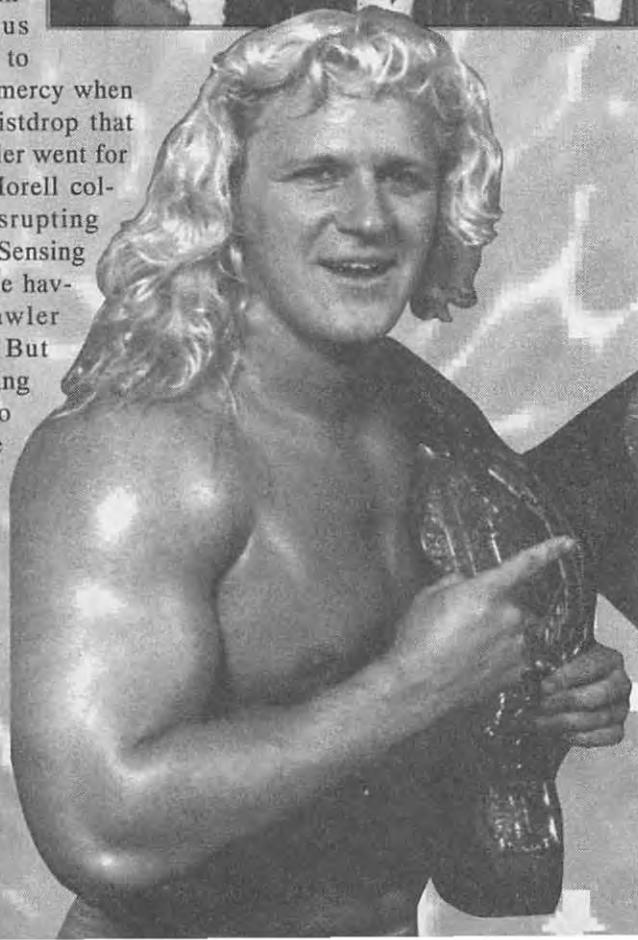
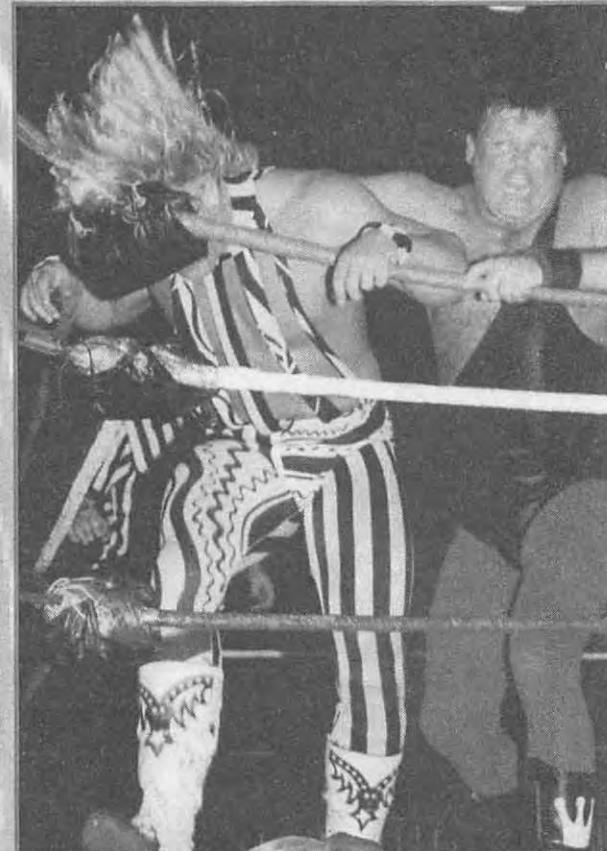
The decisive war came on April 20, and on that day, Jarrett scored one of the biggest wins of his career by pinning his longtime friend for the USWA belt.

That victory may have come with a steep price tag, though, as it may lead to the demise of the Lawler-Jarrett pact and, more importantly, their friendship.

It wouldn't be a stretch to say Jarrett's victory was tainted, because it came with the help of a new ally, veteran referee Frank Morell. After nearly pinning Jarrett numerous times, Lawler appeared to have "Double-J" at his mercy when he delivered a flying fistdrop that stunned Jarrett. As Lawler went for the pinfall, however, Morell collapsed, completely disrupting the flow of the match. Sensing that the official might be having a heart attack, Lawler rushed to his rescue. But Jarrett, rather than helping his friend attend to Morell, rolled "The King" up from behind. Morell, as if revived by the wrestling gods above, jumped up and made the three-count.

For Lawler, who has held the USWA title an unprecedented 22 times, the loss was as bittersweet as a man relinquishing his girlfriend to his favorite lit-

It appears the days of Jarrett and Lawler trading wristlocks (left) in the ring are over; now Lawler is going after his longtime pal with a fury (below). Could you see fans cheering Lawler as he attacks Jarrett in the WWF?



tle brother. And though Jarrett hinted at an imminent rematch, many ring aficionados believe the two will never enter the ring again as friends.

"This is not only a breach of a verbal contract—it's an insult," said USWA matchmaker Randy Hales, who witnessed the match. "What they pulled off was unthinkable."

Jarrett, proudly bearing the shimmering gold belt, thought otherwise.

"Once you get into the ring," he said, "all bets and friendships are off."

Are all bets off for Jarrett and Lawler?

WWF insiders seem to think so.

"What happened recently to them comes as no surprise to me," said a WWF official. "We know they've had their disagreements down in Memphis before, but we don't want this war exploding in the WWF."

How will this apparent break affect their relationship in the WWF? Well, since the two men had forged their own two-

man "us against the WWF" army, it will be interesting to see how WWF fans respond to them. With Jarrett now viewed by the entire wrestling community as a bad guy, it is conceivable that WWF fanatics will back Lawler should their USWA feud cross over into the WWF.

At the very least, the two will be kept apart in order to preserve peace within WWF ranks.

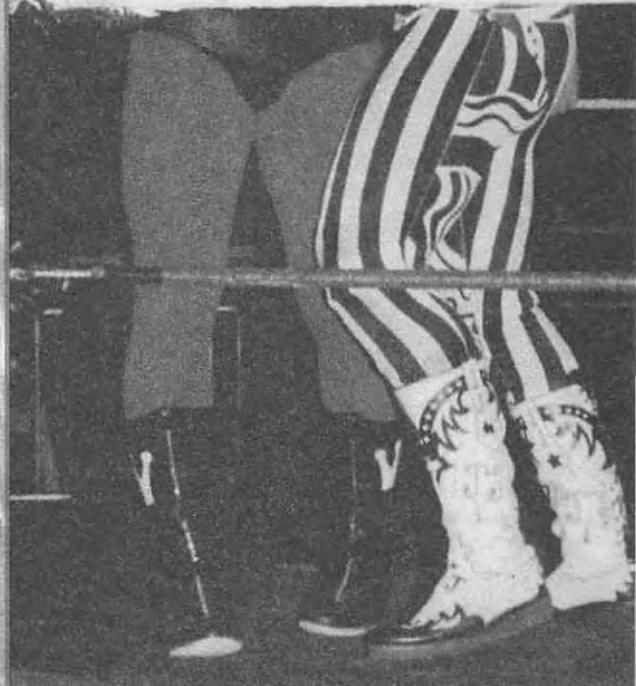
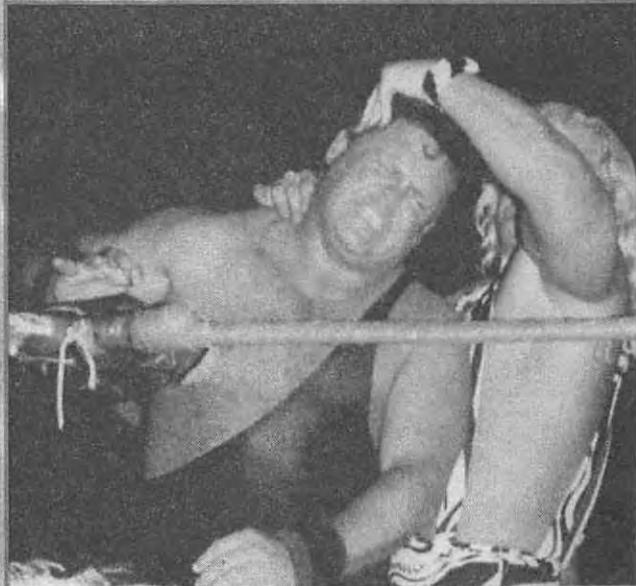
"Considering what happened recently, we don't want them eating together, training together, or traveling together when they're in the WWF," said a WWF official. "We don't even want them thinking about each other. Say what you will about their recent troubles, but both of them are fine wrestlers and are key contributors to the WWF. We need Lawler on *Monday Night Raw*. We need Jarrett's attitude. But we don't want them killing each other over the recent turn of events in the USWA. They have to settle that

In addition to holding the USWA heavyweight title 22 times, Lawler has shared the USWA tag team title with Jarrett four times. Most people in Memphis would rather these two on the same side.

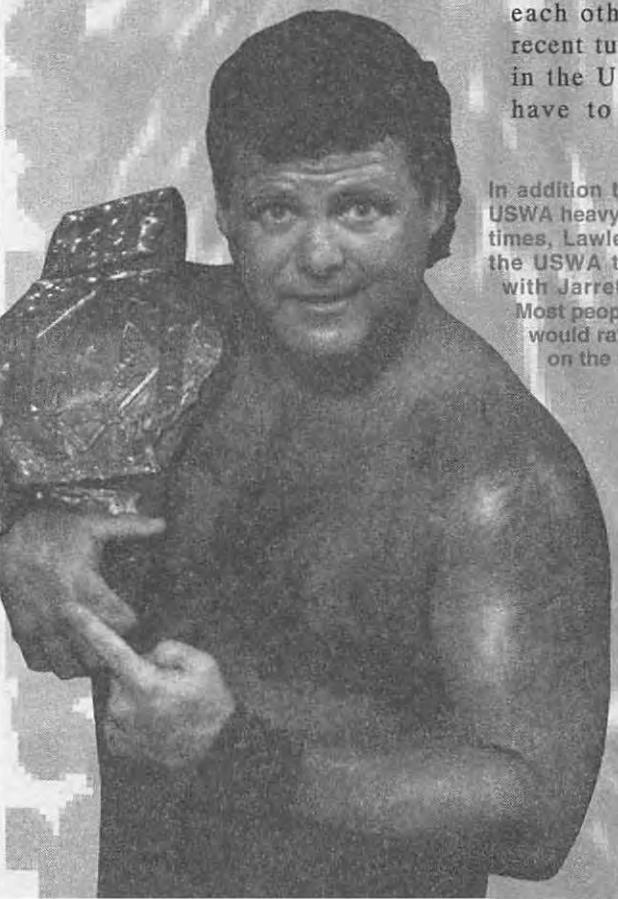
down there."

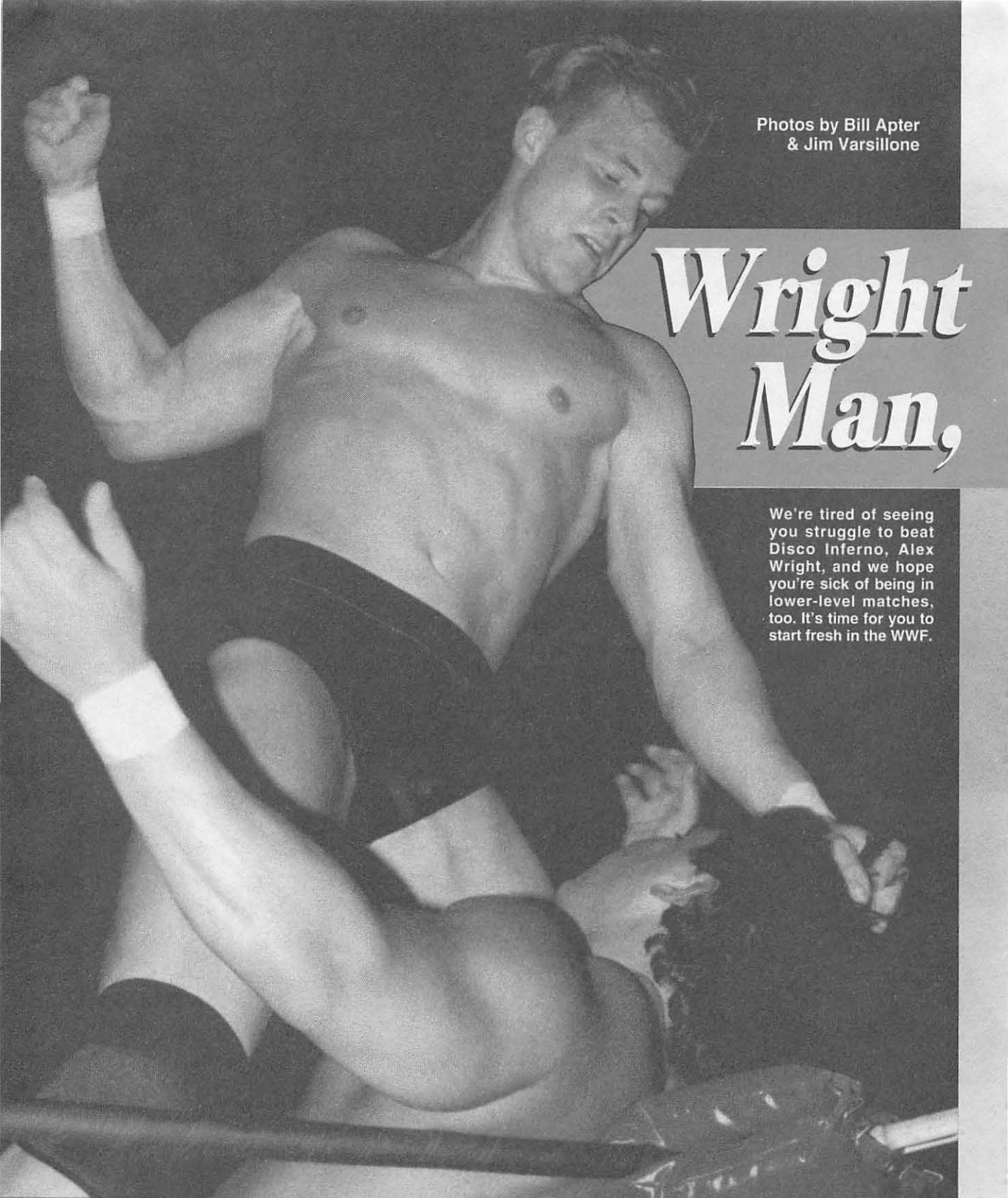
It remains unclear whether Jarrett and Lawler will settle their differences in the USWA and still live by the terms of their pact. Both have said they will try to get along in the WWF. But what is clear is that the WWF is enforcing its own internal code by which the two dissenting athletes must abide.

Look out, however. Sparks are ready to fly. □



Certain WWF officials are watching those battles between Lawler and Jarrett in the USWA and are praying they don't last much longer. It's possible they won't, too. The two men have feuded briefly before.





Photos by Bill Apter
& Jim Varsillone

Wright Man,

We're tired of seeing you struggle to beat Disco Inferno, Alex Wright, and we hope you're sick of being in lower-level matches, too. It's time for you to start fresh in the WWF.

IT'S TIME FOR ALEX

Lack of talent isn't Wright's problem. He has learned some fundamental holds to complement his aerial skills. His problem is that he went into a slump after having great success in his first six months in WCW. Now he's having a hard time getting good matches.

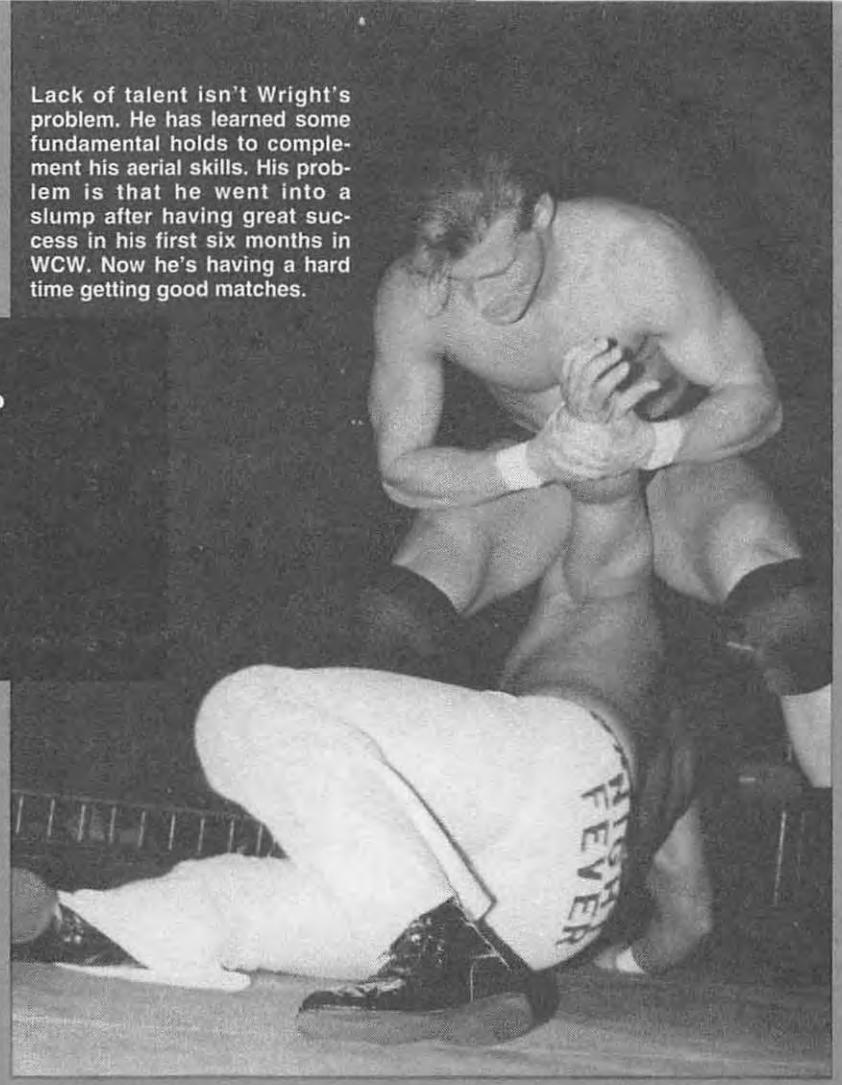
Wrong Place

By Steve Anderson

CAREER COUNSELING IS a growing industry. Its success can be attributed to an unstable job market. People with great potential are under-achieving due to negative work environments. That inevitably leads to failure. Change is needed. Often a new work place is just what a person needs.

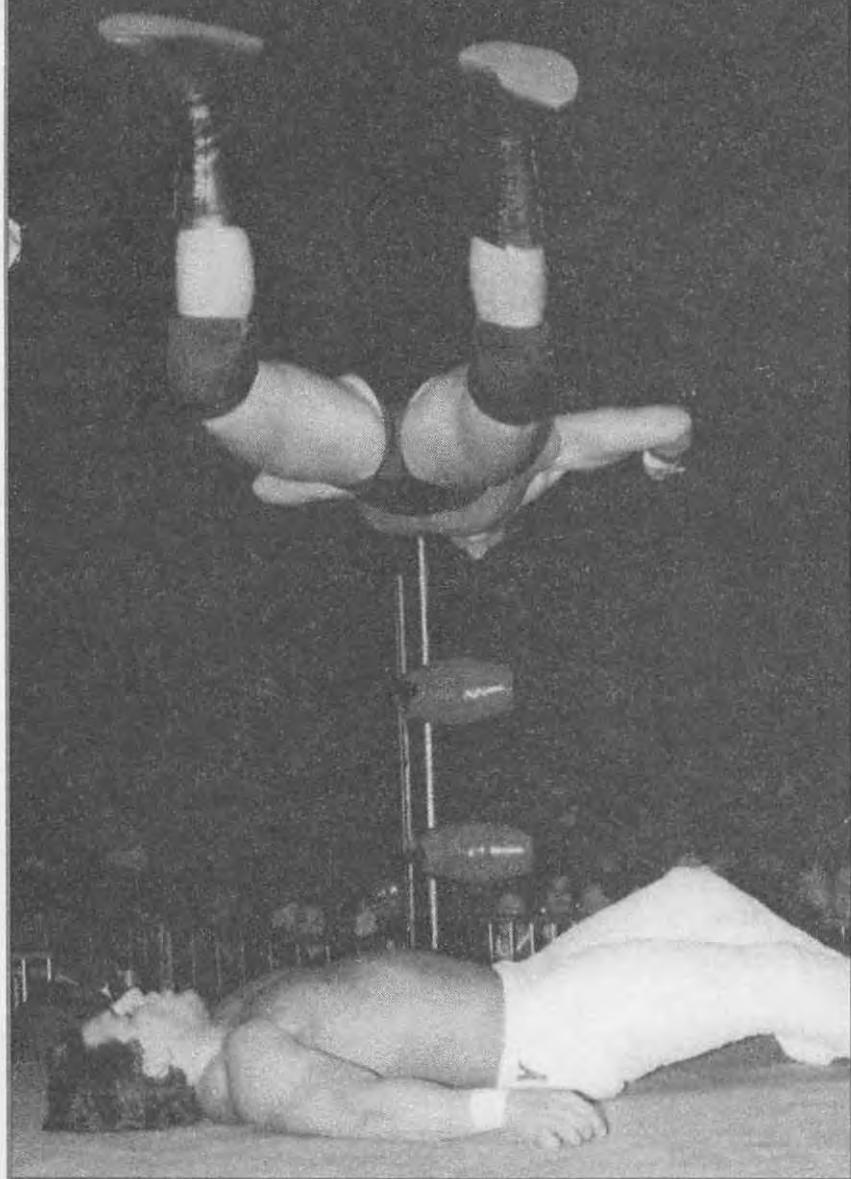
At age 18, Alex Wright found himself with his first full-time job. It required commitment, dedication, and talent on his part. And he needed to make his mark immediately. He has done that and more as a wrestler.

He entered WCW full of promise and potential. That promise and potential led the young German to key wins and fine performances in title matches. Those wins and fine performances in turn led to his winning the 1995 PWI Rookie of the Year award.



WCW is billed as the federation where the "big boys play." With the emphasis now being on big, "Das Wunderkind" Alex Wright is becoming "Das Afterthought" and may be due for a change of scenery and initials

TO TAKE FLIGHT



Wright still spends a lot of time in the gym making sure the moves he executes off the ropes are executed as close to perfectly as possible. He says he needs to make his own breaks; we say he should break away from WCW.

That was then. And then was a long, long time ago.

The bricks that paved the road to success for Alex Wright have now formed a wall that is preventing him from rising above mid-card status. Once he stood toe-to-toe with the Flairs and Andersons of WCW. "Das Wunderkind" proved that he had more in his repertoire than just a strange dance. Now he struggles against the likes of Disco Inferno.

Yes, that Disco Inferno.

But how can a shooting star crash like a meteor? Simply put, the

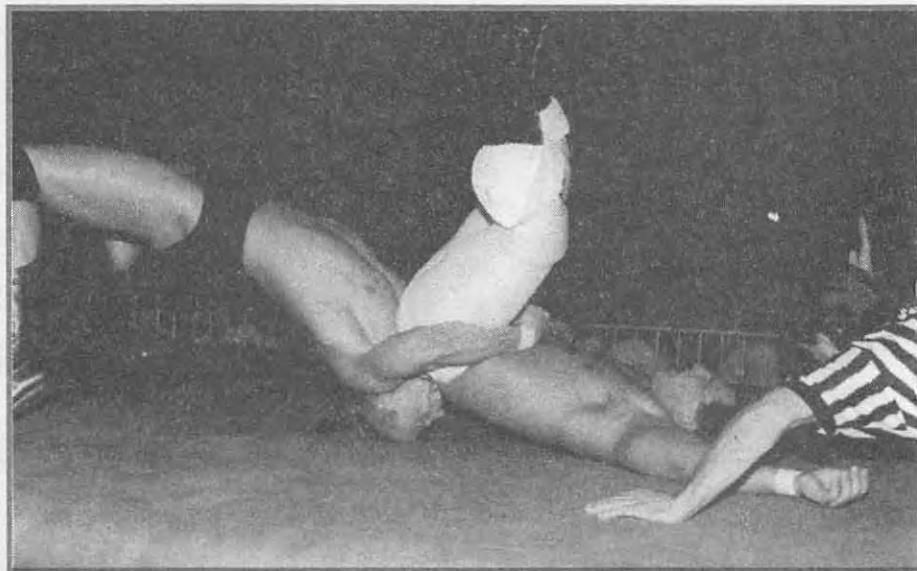
WCW that Alex Wright entered is not the same WCW that exists today. Brawn and experience are in, while youth and terrific athletic talent are ... well, not exactly out, but maybe getting pushed into the background.

Yes, we can give WCW some credit for establishing that cruiserweight division, but let's wait to see if lasts a while before we dole out too much credit. The WCW light heavyweight title was around for all of 11 months in 1991-92 before the powers-that-be lost interest. History could very well repeat itself.

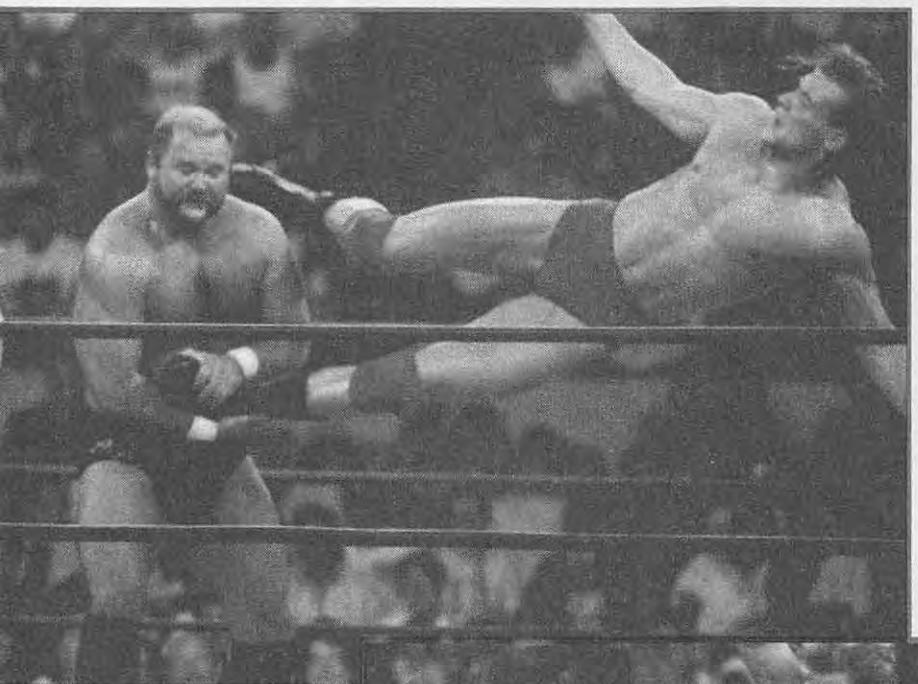
Alex Wright could also adapt to the changing environment in WCW. After all, isn't that what being a professional is all about? Perhaps Wright should change his style or bulk up to battle the men towering over him. Isn't he partly to blame for his struggles?

"Yes, I am," he responded. "It's not just the big men here. It's a number of wrestlers I am having problems with. Sometimes even if a man cheats to beat you, you let the loss bother you and affect you in the next match. That's how the slumps start."

A wrestler like Alex Wright shouldn't have to change much. He



It takes a lot of skill and determination to execute a belly-to-back suplex, then turn it into a bridge for a pin, but Wright did it here against Disco Inferno. We still think he could contend for titles in any promotion.



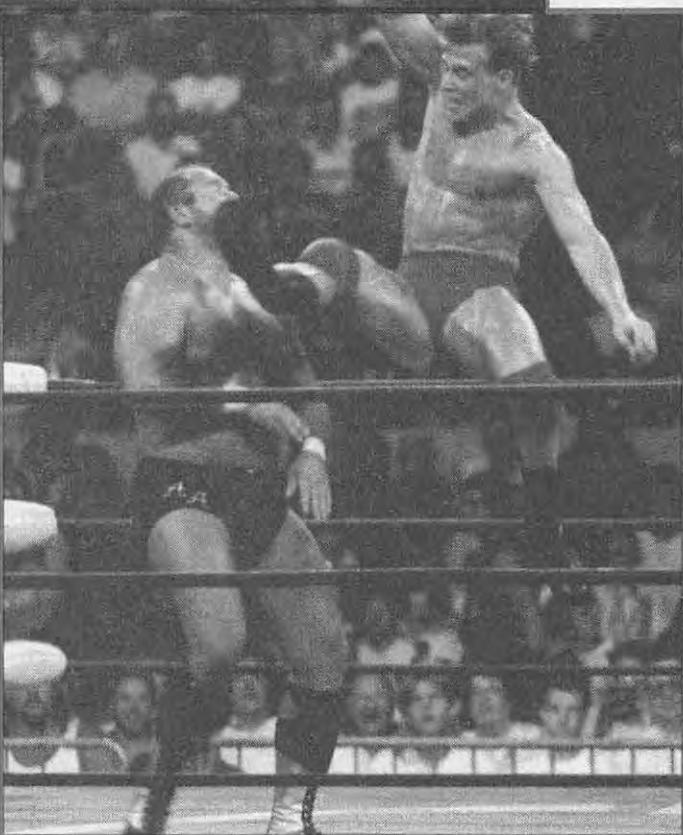
"Das Wunderkind" got one of his first title matches in WCW at Slamboree '95, when he dominated then-TV champ Arn Anderson for much of their bout before losing. His next shot at a title in WCW might be a long way off.

has natural skills that most aspiring wrestlers would kill for. But with the talent level and depth of WCW at an all-time high, one slump can be devastating. But why should Alex Wright change just for the sake of change? That could cause far more damage to his career in the long run than a win-loss record heavy on losses could.

The good news for Wright is that there is hope. But what we offer as career counseling is not a change of vocation, but a change of *location*. A relocation due north ... to Stamford, Connecticut, home of the WWF.

After all, when was the last time he was featured on a major (or minor) pay-per-view or live *Nitro* match?

This move would not be on par



with Razor Ramon or Diesel jumping to WCW or Johnny B. Badd/Marc Mero joining the WWF, and that should concern Wright the most. He is now a WCW afterthought. Now that all the hype that surrounded him when he first came to WCW is gone, he is in danger of being stuck at mid-card status. As a career counselor might say, he is overqualified for that position.

Right now, two out of the three major WWF titles are held by lighter-weight wrestlers. World champion Shawn Michaels tops out at 234 pounds. Bart and Billy Gunn, the tag team champions, weigh a *combined* 465 pounds. With Diesel and Ramon jumping to WCW, size takes on an even greater importance in Wright's current federation, and is further deemphasized in the WWF.

Wright would be a great new addition to the WWF's New Generation. The two-year veteran is barely 20 years old. And, like Shawn Michaels, who also started his career as a teenager, Wright could patiently ply his trade under the bright lights of Titan and eventually see his hard work pay off with a title or two.

If he stays in WCW, he will have to find a way to push the Hogans, Giants, Flairs, Lugers, Savages, and Stings out of the spotlight. It's just not going to happen anytime soon. And Wright is too talented to just wait around.

Our advice to "Das Wunderkind"? Polish up that resume. Put together that audition tape. Pack up the car and point the compass north. Fill out the application neatly and completely. Be on time for the interview. Interview well and the job will be yours.

"WCW is my home, and I plan to keep it my home for many, many years," pondered Wright. "Things have changed, but I will have to find ways to make my own breaks."

It wasn't supposed to be like this. Wright was supposed to be competing for WCW titles by now, but it just isn't happening that way. We think WCW's loss could be the WWF's gain. And Alex Wright could gain more than anyone. □

**She's No
BOOB!**



SUNNY

**MORE
THAN
JUST SEX
APPEAL!**



**Everybody knows
that Sunny is one of
the most beautiful,
alluring women in
wrestling. But tests
prove that she might
also be the smartest**

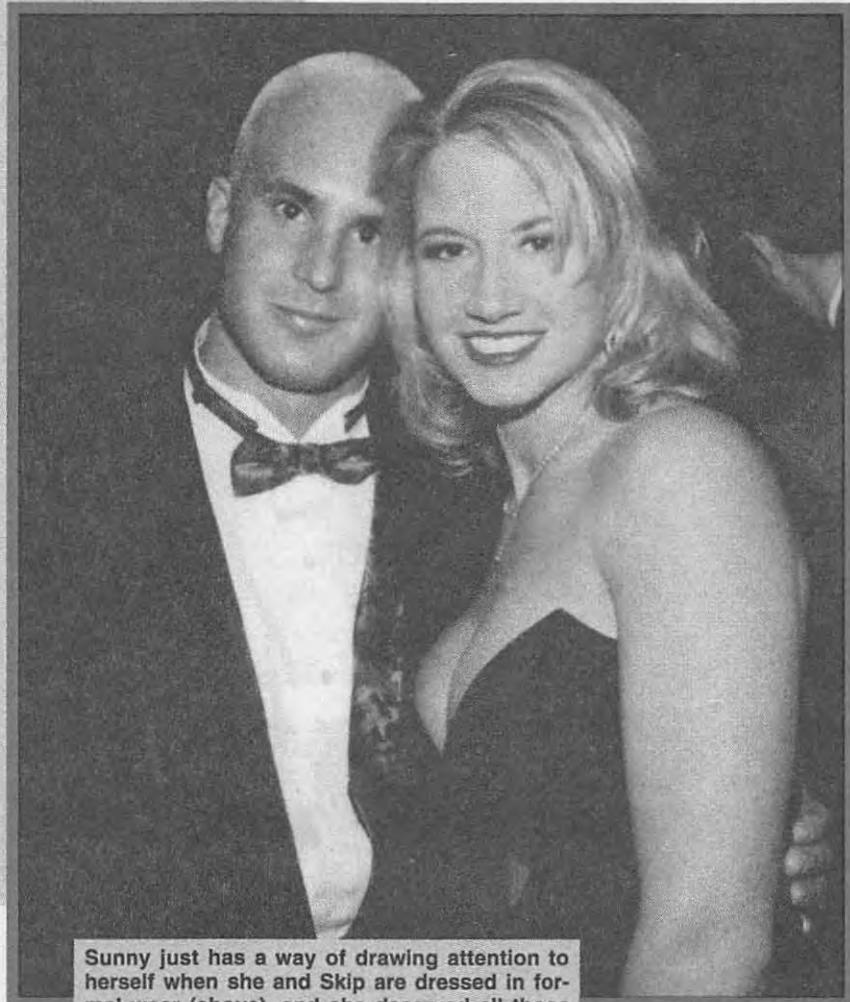
By Dave Rosenbaum

ALTHOUGH TAMMY "Sunny" Fytch was born with a silver spoon in her mouth, she wasn't going to let privilege get in the way of developing her mind. She decided very early in life that she wanted to attend the prestigious Wellesley College in Massachusetts and major in pre-law. And after she graduated from high school, lo and behold, she did go on to Wellesley, where one instructor, according to her, once called her "the most brilliant female mind to come out of this school in 20 years."

But law stopped being a passion for Fytch before her four years there were up, and she set her sights on pro wrestling.

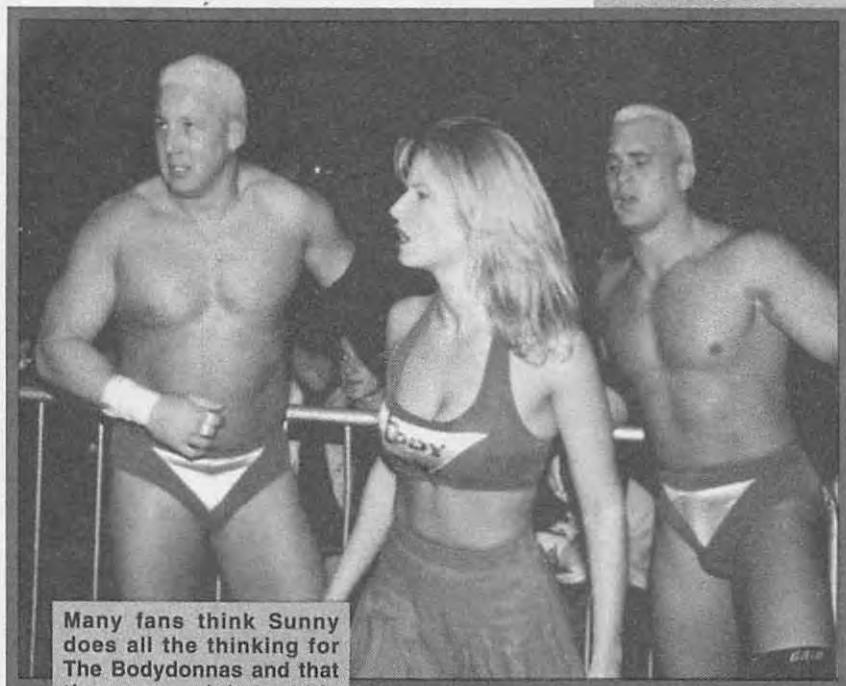
"It was always a dream of mine that I had tucked into the back of my mind," she once said. "Then one day a teacher said to me, 'You can be whatever you want to be.' I don't think he thought I wanted to be a wrestling manager, but that's what I wanted to be, so I went for it and made it big."

The idea of failure never crossed Sunny's mind because, as she said, "I'm one of the smartest women in the world. I'm certainly smarter than anybody in wrestling."

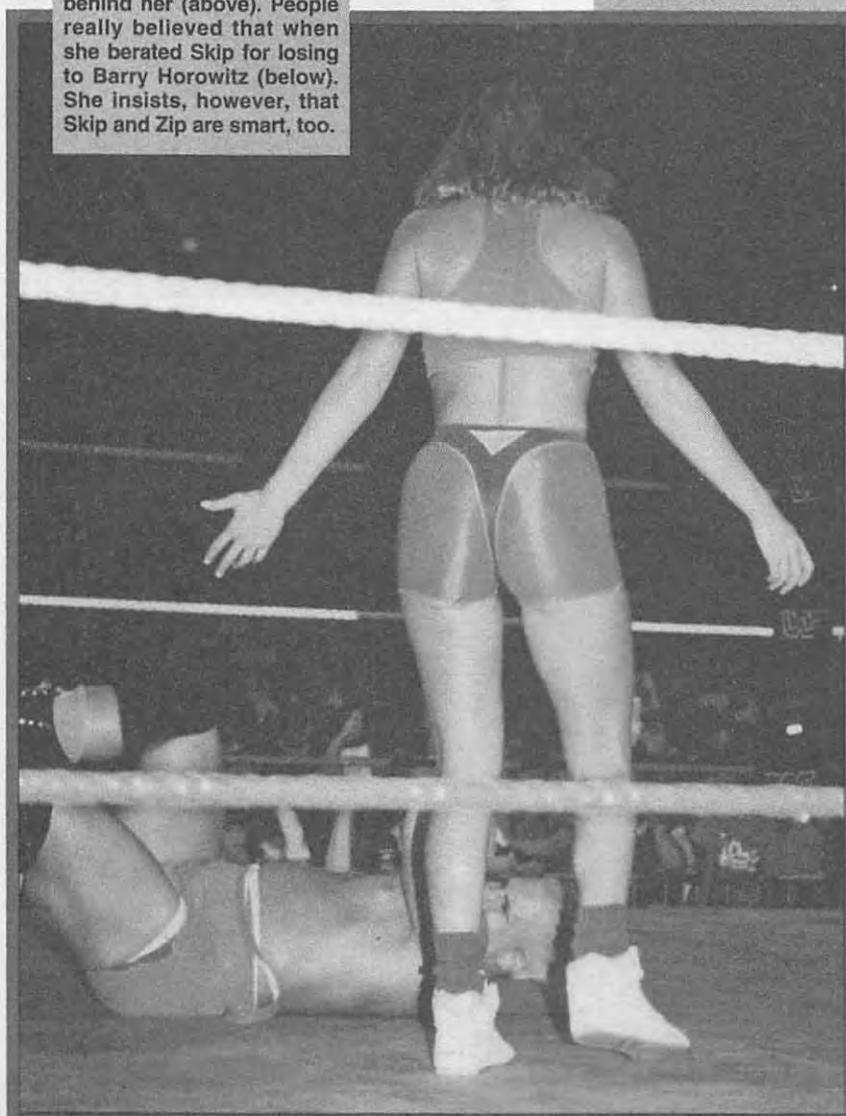


Sunny just has a way of drawing attention to herself when she and Skip are dressed in formal wear (above), and she deserved all those Slammies she won this year (below), but what is perhaps most impressive about her is her intelligence—and not just her wrestling knowledge.





Many fans think Sunny does all the thinking for The Bodydonnas and that they are quick to hide behind her (above). People really believed that when she berated Skip for losing to Barry Horowitz (below). She insists, however, that Skip and Zip are smart, too.



But three years later, with success tucked into her purse, Sunny's astounding beauty seems to have overshadowed her intelligence. As the manager of The Bodydonnas, Sunny revealed her shapely derriere to Phineas Godwinn at WrestleMania XII, enabling Skip and Zip to win the WWF World tag team title. A few weeks later at In Your House VII, Sunny was again on display for an admiring Phineas. Again The Bodydonnas went home winners.

But by no means is this a case of all beauty, no brains ... a blonde bimbo ... a lot of open space between the ears. Sunny is smart. Very smart, indeed.

How smart?

Well, on a scale of one to 10, Sunny's more than bright ... she's brilliant. Even a great body can't hide her intelligence.

We know this because we put Sunny to the test, and it wasn't the kind of test for which you can study. This wasn't one of those aptitude tests that asks you to read a paragraph and answer multiple-choice questions. The test was similar to typical IQ tests or the tests given to NFL draft prospects at scouting combines; it was designed to measure a person's natural intelligence and ability to think logically.

It had questions such as:

What is the next number in the sequence 1.41, 2, 2.83, 4?

Sunny correctly figured that it was a square root sequence of 2, 4, 8, and 16. She also determined that the next number was 5.66, the square root of 32.

Sunny scored a 155 on a scale that goes up to 200 (nobody has ever scored higher than 189), and it came as no surprise to her.

"I've been saying this all along," she said. "But since when can't a woman have everything? Every-

body knows what I look like—I'm absolutely gorgeous—but now they know that there's a brain behind this pretty face. Any doubts?"

None, especially after a series of building block tests that Sunny completed in much less than the allotted five minutes for five sets of blocks. These tests are specifically designed to test a person's ability to use logic, and if these tests are the judge, Sunny's one of the most reasonable people on this planet. In fact, she scoffed at the ease of the tests.

"I thought they were treating me like a child, then one of the guys giving the test tried it and didn't get even two done in five minutes," Sunny said. "I guess some people are more stupid than I thought."

She negotiated a difficult maze—three-minute time-limit—in 73 seconds. Finally, we decided to give her a try at the *London Times* Sunday crossword puzzle, considered the toughest in the world. She completed it in 29 minutes. A cryptic crossword used at a recent puzzle competition was completed in 6 minutes, 46 seconds, well inside the nine-minute limit.

In every imaginable category used to measure intelligence and the power of a person's mind, Sunny came out close to genius levels.

"What do you expect?" Sunny said. "I'm brilliant, and I spend all my time with two brilliant men. We're a dream team—smart, athletic, and very beautiful."

Skip concurred with Sunny's comments.

"She's right—we're all smart," he said. "She's reading books all the time."

Believe it or not, Sunny claims to have recently completed Tolstoy's classic *Anna Karenina*—nearly 800 pages of difficult reading—in nine days. She claimed that a women's group recently asked her to speak at a seminar on the role of women in sports, but she refused.

"I knew that even that group would prejudge me," Sunny said. "I thought, *How would they react if I walked in wearing a bikini or a short skirt?* I decided they'd probably be a bunch of hypocrites. Who cares? Let them be that way."

Sunny doesn't have to prove anything to anyone. Her intelligence is now a matter of record. □



Typical Sunny: She does a lot of trash-talking before her men wrestle (left), then looks flustered when they struggle (right). Don't go assuming she's too emotional, though. She's always thinking when she's at ringside.



911's call For Help:

911 IS NOT AMONG WCW WORLD CHAMPION THE GIANT'S TOP CHALLENGERS. HE DOESN'T EVEN WRESTLE IN WCW. BUT THE 1994 ROOKIE OF THE YEAR FIRMLY BELIEVES HE CAN BE THE CHAMPION. ALL HE NEEDS IS THE CHANCE—AND A LITTLE HELP TO GET IT

By Dave Rosenbaum

THE TALE OF the tape doesn't tell much of a tale.

911 stands 6'7".

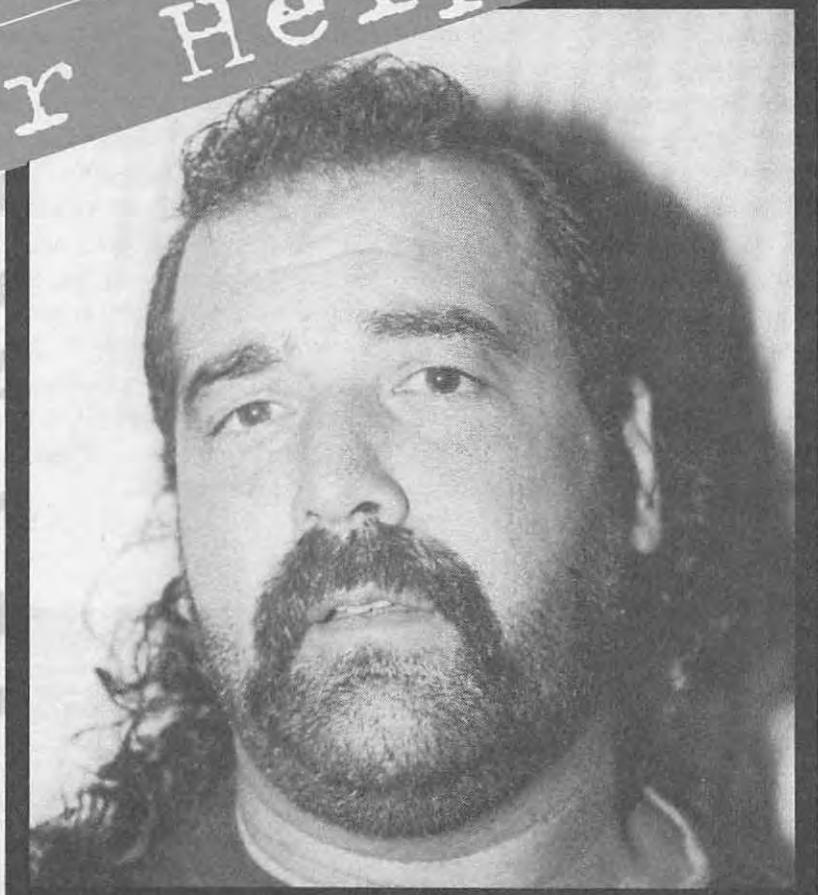
The Giant stands 7'4".

911 weighs 310 pounds.

The Giant weighs 430 pounds.

But the similarities between The Giant and 911 go beyond mere numbers. These two behemoths are more similar than you might imagine.

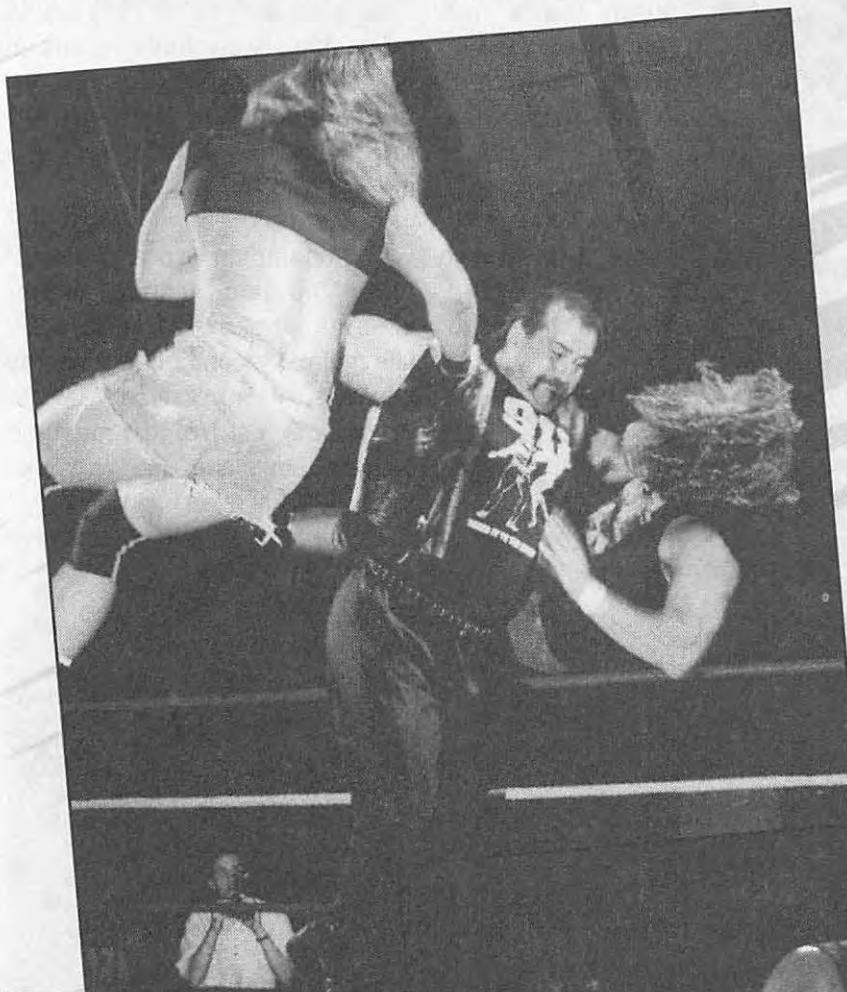
For one, nobody seems to know exactly where either of these wrestlers come from. 911 and The Giant know, but they don't like to talk about it.



"I NEED
A MATCH
WITH THE
GIANT!"

And they're similar in lack of experience, too. 911 first showed up in ECW in 1994; The Giant made his pro debut in WCW in 1995.

ference between these men: The Giant is the WCW World heavyweight champion; 911 has nothing, but he wants something.



Choke-slam vs. choke-slam ... who do you like? 911 has shown he can execute them in pairs (above), but The Giant has put his to use on more well-known victims (right). We'd love to see these choke-slam artists go at it!

The most glaring similarity, however, is glaring and painful to any man who has wrestled either of them. It is a finishing move so devastating that Hulk Hogan shocked the world when he got up from one delivered by The Giant. A move so devastating that some wrestlers have secretly petitioned wrestling organizations to ban it, claiming the move is a variation of the choke-hold.

911 and The Giant are both masters of the crippling choke-slam.

But there's one other major dif-

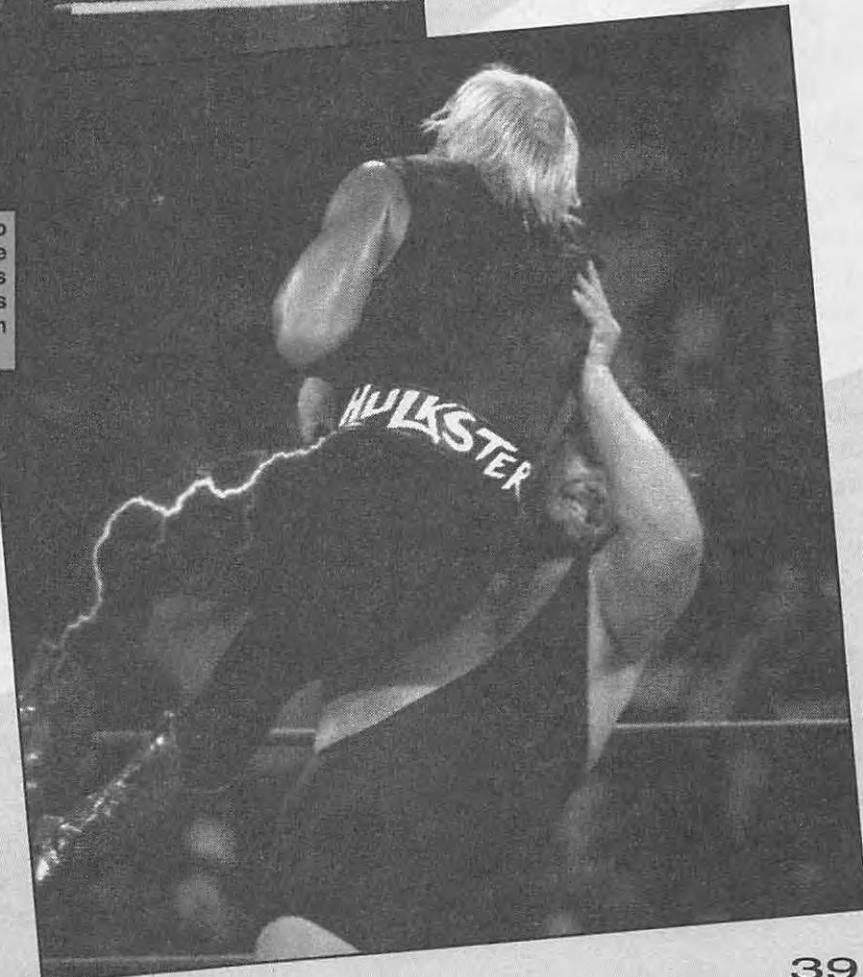
Like, perhaps, a match against The Giant.

"I don't just want it—I need a match with The Giant!" 911 declared during a break from his not-so-hectic recent schedule. "I need to show, and the world needs to know, that my choke-slam is more devastating than his. I can tell from watching on TV that he's very sloppy when he uses his. And on top of all that, there is more to me than there is to him. He'd never even get the chance to use his choke-slam on me. I'd just pick my spot."

Just to show how daring and confident he is, 911 made the following incredible challenge:

"I'll match him choke-slam for choke-slam, and he can even go first," 911 said. "How about getting me a WCW contract and we'll find out who's tougher!"

That's right. In a stunning variation of punch-for-punch, 911 is



willing to match choke-slams with The Giant and is willing to let The Giant deliver the first slam.



that it's ridiculous that The Giant is walking around with the WCW

World title because of a choke-slam that's not anywhere close to being better than mine. This proves what I've known all along: I have what it takes to be the most dominant and most feared

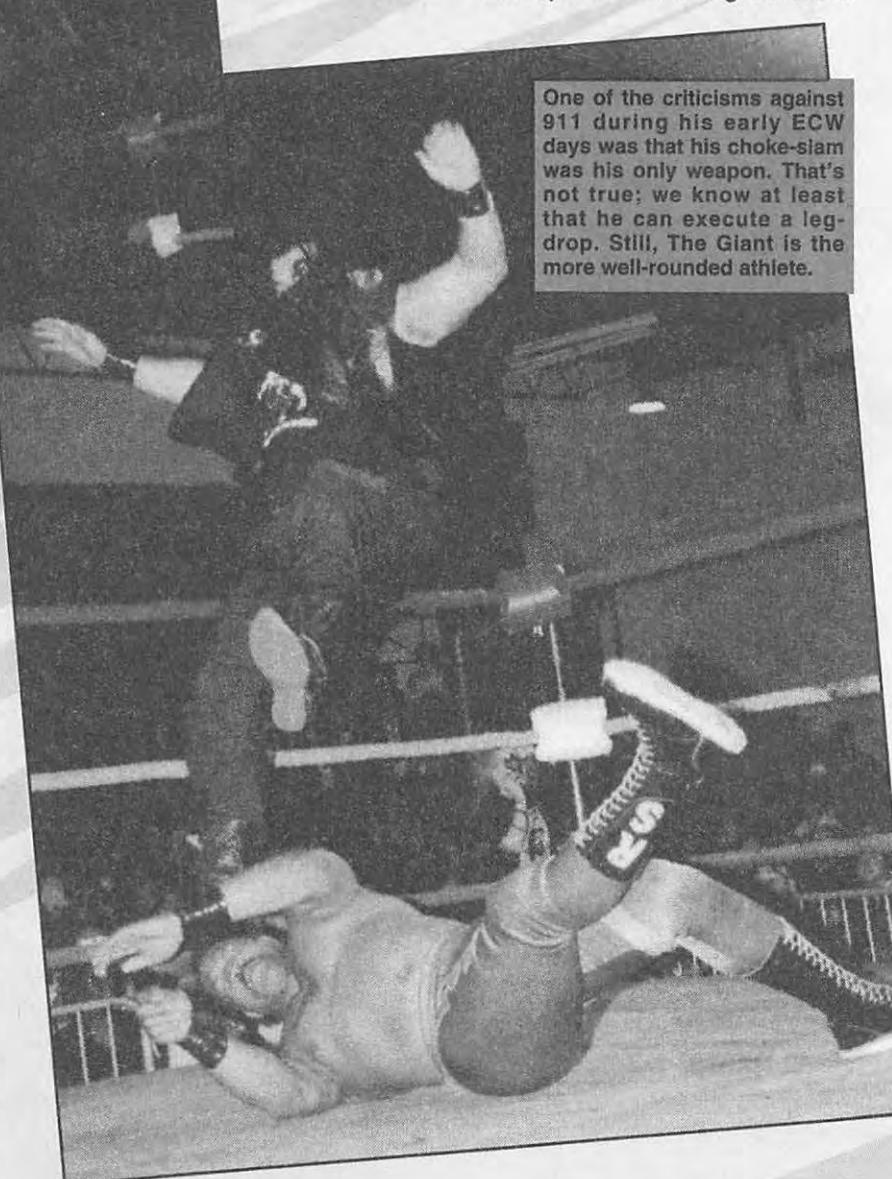
911 was known to repeatedly choke-slam helpless ECW victims such as The New Jersey Devil just for the fun of it. Despite what he says, though, 911 would clearly have a much more difficult time lifting The Giant even once.

wrestler in the world."

Not that he'll get to prove it, unless he finds a way to follow Public Enemy to WCW. And even if he signs with WCW, 911 would more than likely have to spend months working his way up the federation ladder. By that time, The Giant might not even have the belt. 911 doesn't care.

"First of all, it's not a matter of who's champion, it's a matter of pride," he said. "This is choke-slam vs. choke-slam, not just a title match. Second of all, if he has any guts, he won't need WCW to wrestle me. Let him just meet me anytime, any place, and we'll duke it out. Nobody even has to watch."

Perhaps 911 is being so brave



"He wouldn't even hurt me," 911 said.

911, who left the rough-and-tumble world of ECW in February, is confident because he has had some success against Bam Bam Bigelow in their matches throughout the Northeast. Although Bigelow can't match The Giant's size or his choke-slam, he is a formidable opponent.

Wait a minute, you might say. Isn't he the one that lost to a football player?

Well, yeah, Bam Bam Bigelow did lose to former NFL star Lawrence Taylor at WrestleMania XI, but the fact is that 911 has been overpowering at times against this 368-pound former WWF superstar.

"He's nowhere near my league," 911 said. "The thing is

One of the criticisms against 911 during his early ECW days was that his choke-slam was his only weapon. That's not true; we know at least that he can execute a leg-drop. Still, The Giant is the more well-rounded athlete.

because he knows The Giant probably would never and could never accept this challenge. But it's certainly tempting to consider such a matchup and fun to imagine what might happen.

To the best of our knowledge, no opponent has ever gotten up from a 911 choke-slam. He almost always follows the move with a pin, and in some matches, he has merely waited for the opening bell

to ring, then stood in his corner until his foolish opponent charged at him. Then when that happened, he'd calmly grab the man by the throat and choke-slam him. If the fans asked for one or two more, he'd comply.

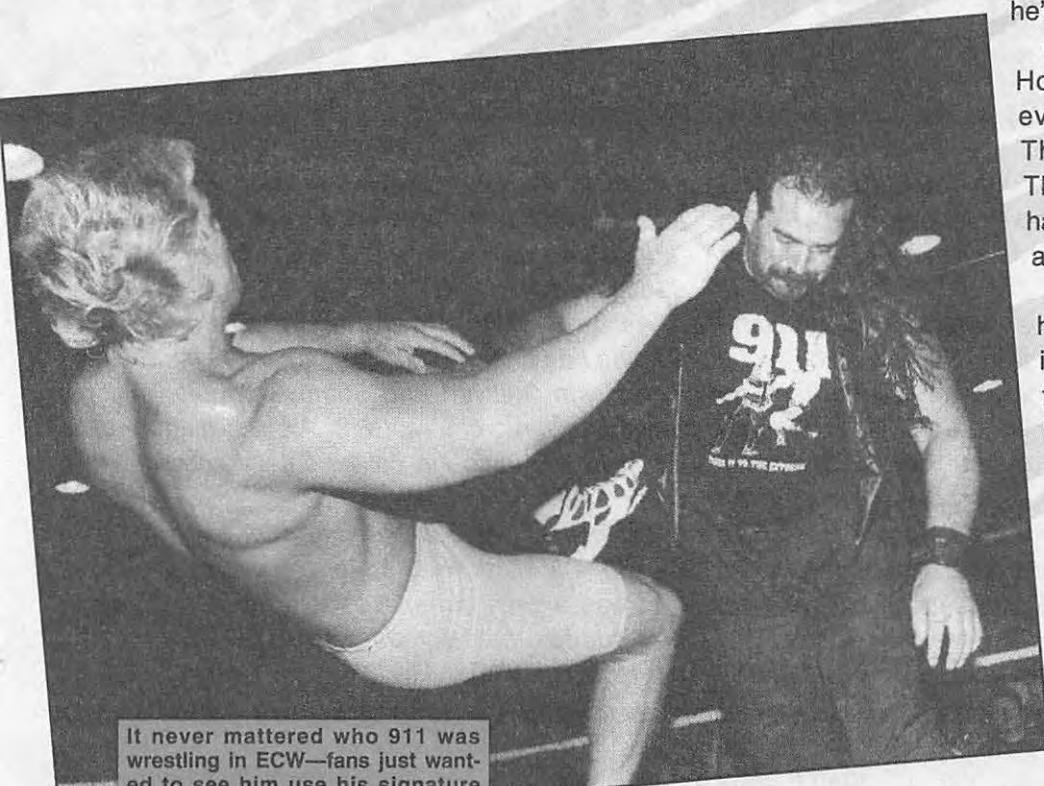
On the other hand, Hogan is the only person ever to get right up from The Giant's choke-slam. The equalizer is that 911 has never wrestled anyone as formidable as Hogan.

Another factor is the height differential of nine inches and the weight differential of 120 pounds. It logically follows that there is more *oomph* behind The Giant's choke-slam and, in addition, it is delivered from much higher up. It's certainly true that the further they fall, the harder they fall.

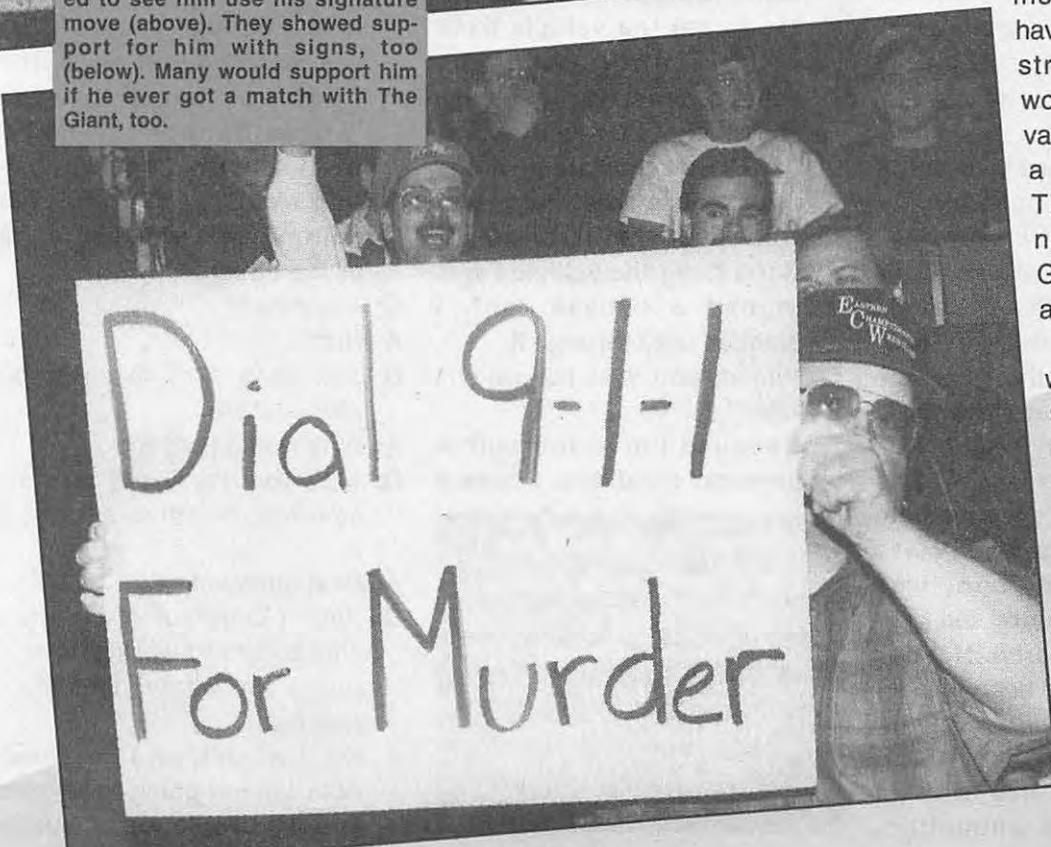
We'd rate them about equal on killer instinct. Both men have a horrifying mean streak. Maybe 911 would be more motivated because he has a lot more to prove. Then again, we've never seen The Giant back off from anyone.

"You can say whatever you want," 911 said. "I know the truth. He'd never get up from my choke-slam—guaranteed."

Too bad we might never find out for sure ... unless The Giant reads this and decides he has a challenge he must answer. □



It never mattered who 911 was wrestling in ECW—fans just wanted to see him use his signature move (above). They showed support for him with signs, too (below). Many would support him if he ever got a match with The Giant, too.



Dial 9-1-1
For Murder

BRIAN PILLMAN

“I'M HAPPY TO BE ALIVE—I THINK!”

APRIL 15 IS tax day in the United States. Time runs out on taxpayers on April 15. This year, it was nearly the day time ran out on Brian Pillman.

On that day, Pillman was driving a military vehicle along a state road in Kentucky, traveling along at about 72 miles per hour, when a videotape he was carrying slid under his seat. When Pillman reached down to pick it up, the vehicle hit a block of cement, crossed over to the other side of the road, and hit a tree stump just outside the road's shoulder. Pillman flew out of the vehicle and 75 feet in the air. He landed with serious face and leg injuries.

Doctors who treated him at a trauma center say

he's lucky he wasn't crippled or killed. But five days after the accident, following extensive surgery, the "Loose Cannon" was out of the hospital and pondering his future.

As he tries to put the accident behind him, Pillman has a lot on his mind, such as his problems with Kevin Sullivan and Shane Douglas, and his recently expired contract with WCW. This traumatic event in Pillman's life coincidentally occurred at a crossroads in his career.

Editor-in-Chief Dave Lenker spoke with Pillman by phone in May. "He had this calmness about him that was almost eerie," Lenker reported. "Then all of a sudden, he'd scream at me. It was a bizarre, but fascinating interview."

Q: This might seem like an odd question to start with, but why did you have a tape of the Stu Hart tribute in your car the day of the accident?

A: Because I wanted to watch it later. I respect Stu Hart.

Q: And, ironically, you almost lost your life because of him.

A: That's a stupid thing to say. It had nothing to do with Stu. It had to do with the videotape and, I admit, something I did that wasn't very bright. Fortunately, I am one of the finest physical specimens in the world. I'm a world-class athlete, and my body was capable of enduring the punishment it suffered. Nobody else would have been able to.

Q: When it happened, did you realize what was going on?

A: At first there's this moment of suspended animation,

then there's a rush. I was trying to get the vehicle back under control, but I was going too fast and there was no real shoulder on the road. To tell you the truth, I didn't even realize what happened when I hit that tree stump. Good thing the vehicle I was in had a canvas roof. I crashed right through it.

Q: Why do you think you weren't killed?

A: Because I'm in incredible physical condition. I have a

“Some doctor told me I might never walk again. I said, ‘You must be talking to the wrong patient. The cripples are down the hall.’

They had to literally bind me to my bed to keep me there!”

20-inch neck that helped me to tear through that roof. The vehicle rolled over twice after I flew out. Leave it to the "Loose Cannon" to find a way to survive. A normal person would've died, but I'm not normal. I'm happy to be alive—I think!

Q: You think?

A: Huh?

Q: You said, "I'm happy to be alive—I think."

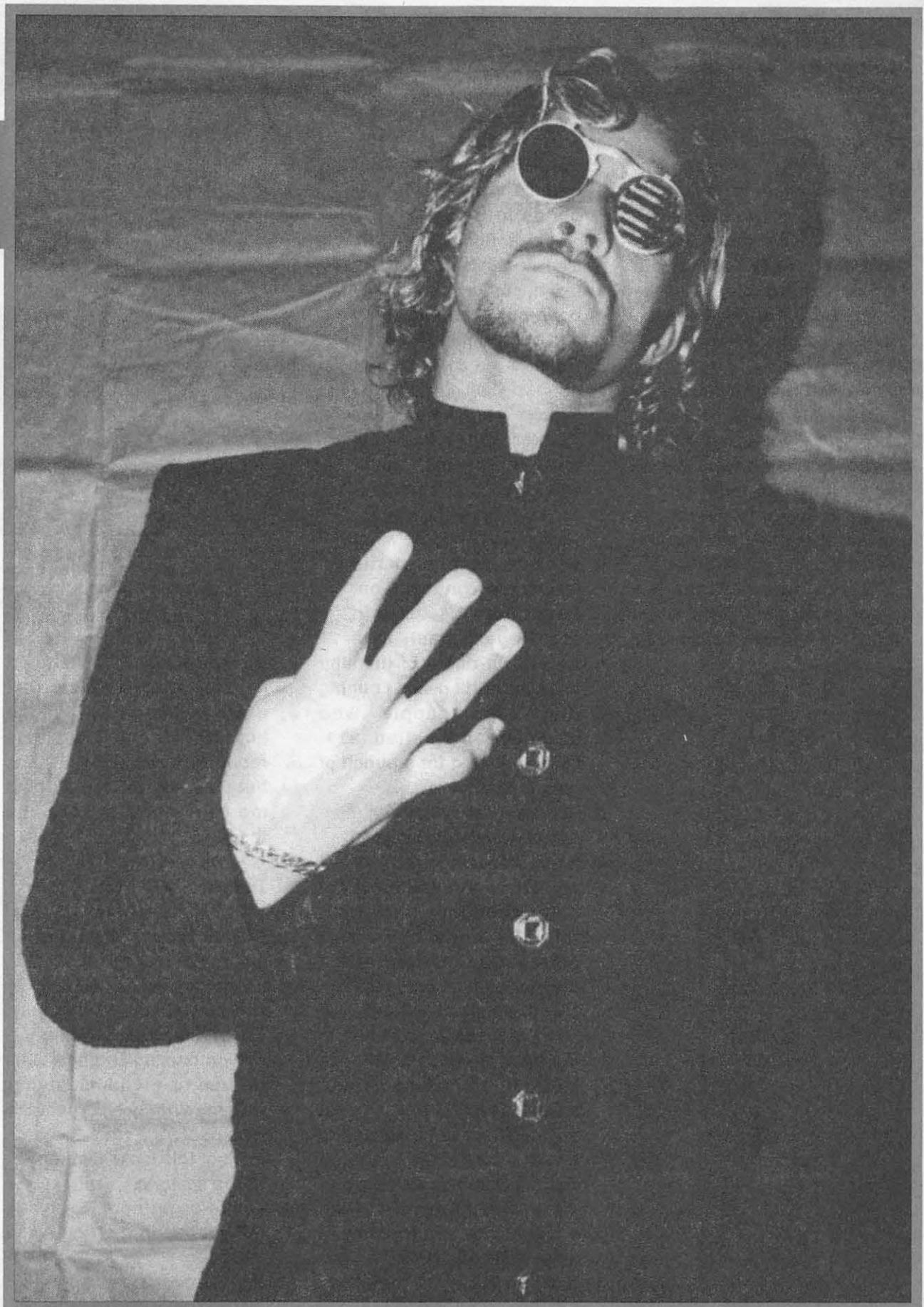
A: Why would I say that?

Q: Well, you did. I'll run back my tape later, but I'm sure you said it.

A: Next question.

Q: Fine. I understand you were shot about 75 feet into the air. I guess you weren't wearing a seat belt.

A: No, I wasn't, and I'm fortunate. I'm not going to sit here and tell people to not buckle



up, but this was one of those rare instances where I was lucky I wasn't wearing it. I would've been strapped in and crushed.

Q: So that's what saved your life?

A: That and my conditioning. Kevin Sullivan, for example, would've been roadkill. There wouldn't have been any remains of Shane Douglas. He would've become part of the road. But I survived. Maybe that makes me indestructible.

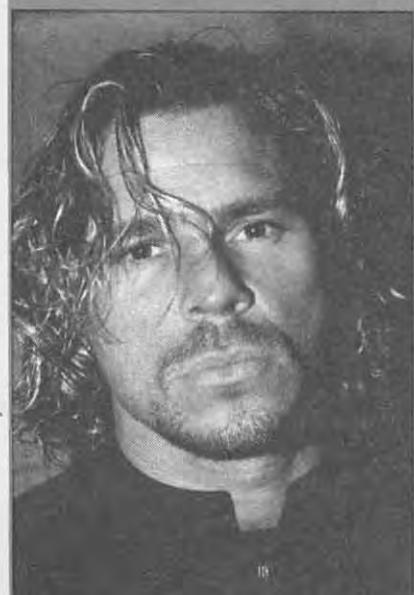
Q: Or very lucky.

A: I said indestructible. Aren't you listening to me?

Q: Do you really believe that?

A: I said it, so I must believe it. I'm a loose cannon. Funny things happen when I'm around. Trouble follows me around, but I always get the best of trouble. Let me ask you a more important question: Does Sullivan believe it?

"You're talking to the hottest free agent on the planet. Ask any promoter. I'm not under contract to anyone. I'm free to go wherever I want. Let the bidding begin!"



Does Douglas believe it?

Q: Let's get back to the accident. You were taken to a trauma center.

A: My face was shattered—at least that's what the doctors said, and they had to put four steel plates in it. My left leg was practically crushed. One doctor said I almost lost it, so they had to take bone out of my right hip and put it in my left leg.

Q: So there's a piece of your hip in your leg right now?

A: You're very smart, Mr. Lenker. Do you know that? That's what I said! I was in critical condition for two days. Basically, you're looking at what used to be one of the fastest men on earth, but I went from 4.4 speed in the 40-yard dash to a face-down dump of humility in an instant! I guess I oughta thank the people who stopped and called 911. Quick thinking for a bunch of nine-to-fivers.

Q: And you must have been mentally down after the accident.

A: Never. Not once did I doubt myself or the ability of my body to bounce back from this. My body has never betrayed me before and it certainly wasn't going to happen this time. There's a reason I spent all those hours in the gym, all those meals eating right and taking care of myself. The first day, a priest came in in case he needed to perform last rites. I made it very clear to him that his services weren't needed. Then some doctor told me I might never walk again. I said, "You must be talking to the wrong patient. The cripples are



Pillman had to be hauled away by security when he showed up unannounced at the ECW Arena in February and threatened to do something lewd. It sounds as if he intends to return to settle a score with Shane Douglas.

down the hall." You should have seen the look on that doctor's face when I left the hospital four days later. I was ready to leave the first day, but they had to literally bind me to my bed to keep me there!

Q: Is rehab next for you?

A: To hell with rehab.

Q: What?

A: Do you have a hearing problem or something? No rehab. It's not necessary. I'll recover and come back my own way. Maybe I'll come back tomorrow on one leg and beat up a referee or a commissioner with my crutches. Expect the unexpected. That's the hallmark of this loose cannon.

Q: You're amazing.

A: You're damn right. Everyone will see me in the ring again real soon.

Q: But the question is where will that ring be? Which federation?

A: Well, sir, it seems to me as if you're talking to the hottest free agent on the planet. Ask any promoter. I'm not under contract to anyone. I'm free to go wherever I want. Let the bidding begin!

Q: But before the accident, you were been hanging around ECW Arena and made no secret of your dislike for Shane Douglas. And you have some unfinished business with Kevin Sullivan.

A: My business with Sullivan is finished. He lost, I won. I'm still a Horseman. I'm the rogue Horseman, the best Horseman ever. Yeah, I like the sound of that. The rogue Horseman, and I haven't forgotten about Shane.

Q: Your dislike for Douglas seems rather intense.

A: Just say I hate him already! He's a quitter. Remember that time he won the NWA title and gave it up? Typical Douglas. He quits at everything he does. He quit the



Pillman had been doing very well in WCW when last seen there. He scored an impressive win over The Renegade in January (above left) and used his aerial skills to dispose of Eddy Guerrero (above right). He won't say for sure if he's going back.

WWF, he quit The Dynamic Dudes, he quit as NWA champ, he even quit as a teacher. People like Shane Douglas are the reason our school system is so messed up. Tell Shane Douglas that the guy who almost died in a car accident is coming after him. Let him work up some more false courage. I'll come at him with fists flyin'!

Q: But if you consider yourself a Horseman, doesn't that mean you'll be back in WCW?

A: It means what I want it to mean. I do what I want to do, and I pass judgment on what I've done every night.

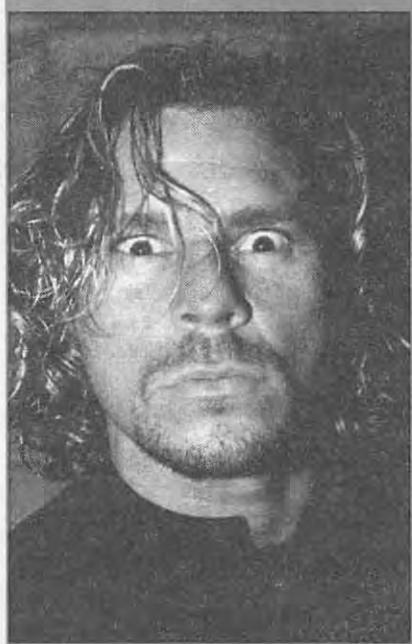
Q: What about the rumors that you'll be showing up in the WWF next?

A: All you fly-by-night journalists do is talk about rumors. Deal with facts, or I'll put you on the top of my hit list. You never had to deal with a loose cannon before. You wouldn't like it, punk!

Q: Anyone else on your hit list?



"Tell Shane Douglas that the guy who almost died in a car accident is coming after him. Let him work up some more false courage. I'll come at him with fists flyin'!"



A: This thing about Steve McMichael getting up from his announcer's chair and getting into the ring bothers me. McMichael's one of those former NFL players who thinks he can be an all-pro in two sports just like that. Not in my violent world. I played professional football and made myself a great wrestler.

Q: So you'd like to wrestle him?

A: I could beat him on one leg, but why waste my time?

Q: Well, Brian, I'm sure you'll be at the center of a lot of controversy in the coming months wherever you go. Thanks for your time. It must be good to be able to talk again after having your jaw wired shut for a month.

A: Oh yes, sir, it is. Thank you for your time. It was my pleasure. □

CHAMPIONSHIP Our Plan To

It's bad enough
professional wrestling
is unable (or unwilling)
to enforce its own rules.
But when championships
are handled in a slipshod
manner, the entire sport
can come unglued.
The time to prevent this
catastrophe is now!

PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING is not a sport that lends itself to stability. There are rules, kind of, but they are enforced sporadically, inconsistently, and arbitrarily. As the largest publisher of wrestling magazines in the world, we have tried to use our influence to unite the sport behind one standardized set of rules. We even devoted 15 pages in the December 1995 edition of our sister publication *The Wrestler*, specifically outlining what those rules should be.

Not one federation responded.

For all the pious ramblings of the sport's Gorilla Monsoons and Nick Bockwinkels, nothing was said about those 15 pages; wrestling apparently is not interested in riding itself of lawlessness and the

profitable controversy that results. (At least ECW Commissioner Tod Gordon doesn't make any pretenses about his promotion's lack of concern about rules enforcement.) So for now, let's narrow in on one aspect of the sport that has become so unruly that it has left cracks in its very foundation.

If nothing else is considered sacred in wrestling, the championship titles must be. But far too often titles change hands in absurd stipulation matches, injured wrestlers are stripped of titles without given a fair chance to recover, lazy wrestlers are allowed to keep titles without defending them within the supposed 30-day limit, and on and on.

April 22 was the breaking point. On that evening in Albany, Georgia, Sting and Lex Luger, the WCW World tag team champions, took on Ric Flair and The Giant. This match will forever be remembered for the coffee-throwing incident that led to the match later on in which The Giant beat Flair for the WCW World title. Just as significantly, however, the tag team match shows just how far off-course the federation—and the sport in general—has allowed itself to drift with regard to championships.

According to the stipulations

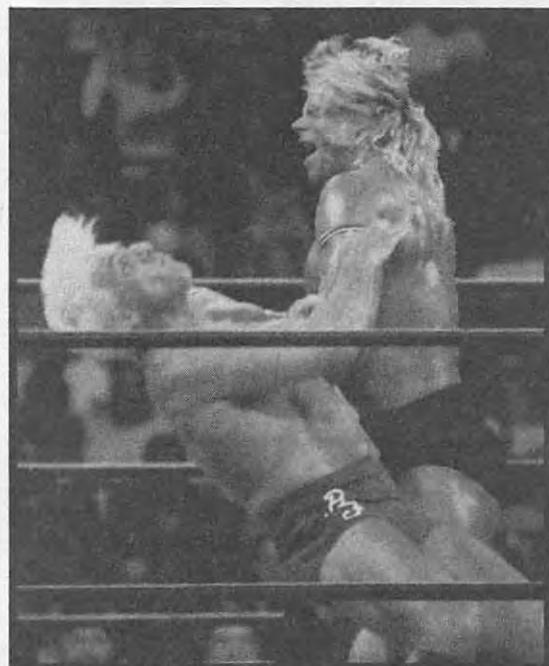


agreed upon prior to the match, Luger would lose his TV title if he were pinned by either Flair or The Giant; Flair and The Giant would win the tag team title if they pinned (only) Sting; and Flair would lose the World title if he were pinned by Luger or Sting. Flair throwing coffee in his teammate's face was the only thing that made sense!

Maybe our goal to unite wrestling behind a single rulebook was a bit lofty. Let's focus in on a set of rules that applies to the sport's championships and hope the federations will take heed this time. The consequences of their inaction would be grave indeed.

CHAOSS!

Restore Order



Only a tag team title can be contested in a tag team match. There is a clear-cut distinction between singles matches and tag team matches. There is absolutely no justification for allowing a singles title to be risked in a match in which the defending champion could easily be the victim of a double-team effort.

Sting wrestled WCW World champ The Giant while he was co-holder of the tag team title this spring (opposite page); that was fine, but he and Lex Luger should have had to give up the WCW tag belts if he won. And Luger should not have been able to defend his TV title in tag team matches (left).

If a singles champion is granted a series of matches against a singles champion at a higher level, he must relinquish his title. Unlike in the above case, the decision to go after a second title affects only that wrestler. So, rather than tie

up the secondary title for an extended period during this series of matches, the lower champion would have to drop his title, allowing it to be put up for grabs in a tournament.

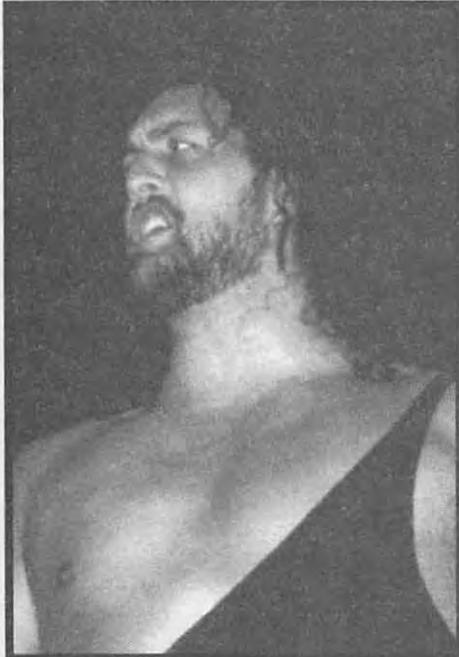
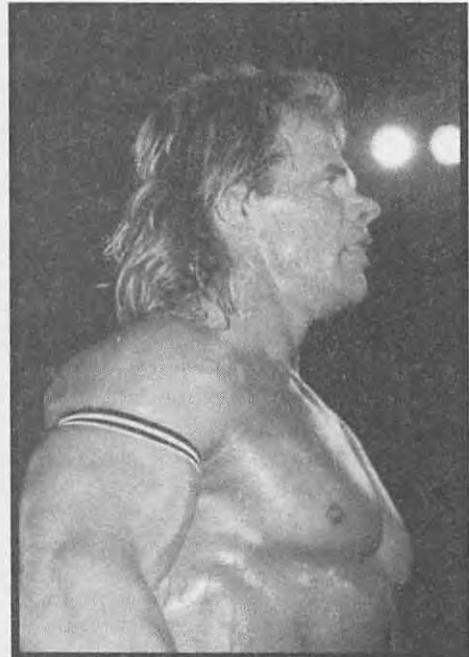
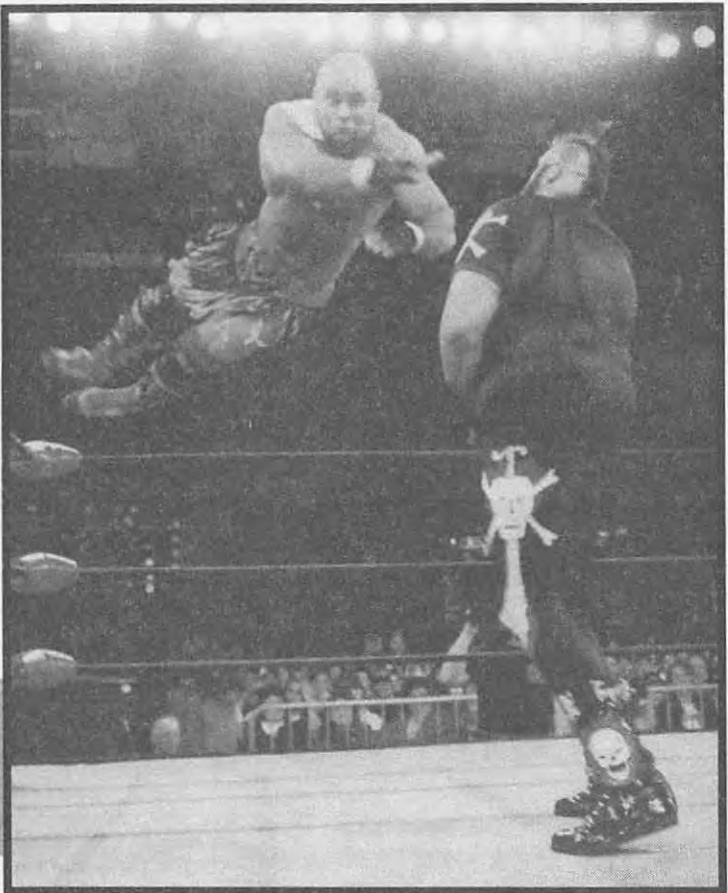
If a reigning tag team champion wins a singles title, the tag team belts must be relinquished. It would be a mistake to prohibit tag team titleholders from trying to further their individual careers, but it has also proven to be unrealistic to expect one man to defend two titles. A tournament would be held to fill the tag team vacancy. In fairness to the wrestler who was stripped because his partner captured a singles belt, he would be allowed to pick a new partner and receive a bye through the first round of the tournament.



WWF World champ Diesel defended his title against Intercontinental champ Jeff Jarrett many times in early-'95. Give "Double-J" credit for going after the World title then, but he should have had to forfeit his belt to do so.

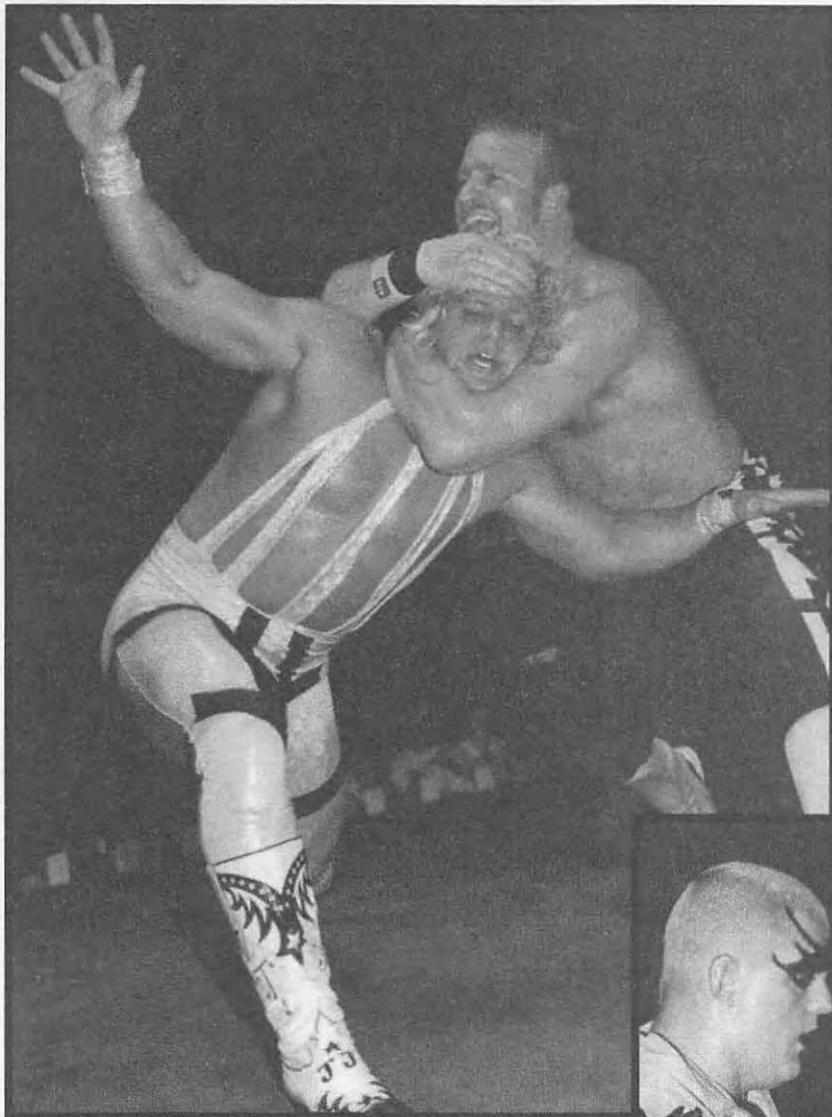
Titles must be defended within a 30-day period. A champion must defend against a qualified contender within the 30-day time frame or be stripped of the title. The exception is an injury that is authenticated by a federation-approved doctor. However, the champion would be stripped if it was determined that the injury would keep him out of action for longer than 60 days. If one partner in a championship tag team is injured and cannot defend the title after the 60-day period, the title would be vacated and put up for grabs in a tournament. The uninjured tag team partner would be allowed to choose another partner and receive a bye through the tournament's first round.

Since winning the WCW U.S. belt from One Man Gang, Konnan has gone long periods of time without defending his title. Other than injuries, there should be no excuse for a champion not defending his belt once every 30 days.



If a wrestler forfeits a title match, he is to be banned from receiving another chance for six months. Forfeits are rare in wrestling, but they do happen. They are unfair to the paying customers and to the champion who spent time in preparation. Unless there is a valid reason for a challenger no-showing, he must be issued swift and harsh punishment.

Lex Luger (above left) failed to show up in time for two straight matches with WCW champ The Giant (above right) this spring, yet he was still granted more World title matches just days later. That makes no sense.



A TV title can only be defended on TV. Weren't TV titles created to add interest to televised wrestling cards in the first place? (We're not entirely sure, but we suspect that there is a minor independent somewhere that has a TV title and has no TV contract!) TV title matches should be limited to 10 minutes, which adds another dimension because it forces the challenger to devise a more offensive-minded strategy than usual.

Jesse James Armstrong was the very first holder of the USWA TV title, but he has defended his belt on many non-televised cards already. If that happens, why call it a TV title?

If a champion deliberately gets himself disqualified or counted out, he must relinquish his title. When rules actually encourage wrestlers with no morals to hit officials or to simply take a hike to the safety of the dressing room, something is very wrong. Sometimes a referee will be accidentally bumped and sometimes a champion will be legitimately counted out of the ring while doing battle with his challenger. But, if in the referee's opinion, these acts are deliberate, the champion cannot be the beneficiary.

When Goldust has problems in the ring, his director, Marlena, advises him to walk away from the match. That wouldn't happen if referees had the authority to decide if a champion deliberately got himself disqualified or counted out and perhaps strip him of his title on the spot.



The telephone wires sizzle each month, as two top wrestlers voice their rage and hostility toward each other. Here's the unedited transcript of their conversation, your chance to feel the raw emotion that results when two antagonists face off ... One On One

THEIR ACTIVE WRESTLING careers never overlapped. Their styles will never be described as similar. In fact, they have little in common. Yet on one fateful night in Omaha, Nebraska, Diesel and Mad Dog Vachon's paths crossed. Diesel was attempting to wrest the WWF title from Shawn Michaels at *In Your House VII*. Mad Dog was in the audience enjoying the brutality that brought back memories of his heyday—a heyday that is in the past since a tragic accident several years ago led to the Dog having to have his left leg amputated.

Then, out of nowhere, Diesel committed one of the most heinous acts in wrestling history: He grabbed Vachon, threw him over the guard rail, and removed his prosthetic leg. As security personnel rushed to the fallen veteran, Diesel attempted to use the prosthesis as a weapon. Ironically, he ended up on the business side of the limb and lost the match because of it.

It was the type of tactic upon which Mad Dog, a two-time AWA World champion, built his career. His career was much different, though. No entrance music. No merchandise sales. Just a brutal combination of wrestling and brawling that got him banned in several states. "Big Daddy Cool" may have gone after the wrong man.

That evening re-lit the competitive fire that burns within the 67-year-old Mad Dog. While his active career is over, he still has the capacity feel intense rage and hatred. Those feelings are reminiscent of feelings he had during his feuds with Jerry Blackwell, Nick Bockwinkel, and Verne Gagne.

While he is not up to a physical, face-to-face battle, Mad Dog was willing to confront his newfound foe over the

phone; he and Diesel went at it "One On One."

DIESEL: Well, how you feelin' there, old-timer?

MAD DOG VACHON: Let me tell you something, Diesel. I may be older than you, but that won't stop me from finding a way to teach you a lesson that you'll never forget.

DIESEL: What? Did you say you're gonna get a leg up on the competition?

MDV: Very funny, punk. You caught me off-guard and blindsided me. Next time, you won't be so lucky. Next time, I'll rip your leg off and beat you with it. Or maybe I'll get someone to do it for me. I have a lot of friends in wrestling, you know.

DIESEL: Not even in your heyday, you fossil. I coulda taken you out faster than when I beat that senior citizen

ONE O



"You should haul your brother out of the nursing home and stack him on top of you. You two together still wouldn't come close to my size!"

—Diesel

Backlund for the WWF title. No contest.

MDV: You forget that my career was all about brutality and taking people out. You're just flirting with it. What happened in Omaha was amateur night.

DIESEL: How so?

MDV: You should have finished me off. If you blindside a Vachon, you better finish the job. Your mistake was walking away while I was still breathing.

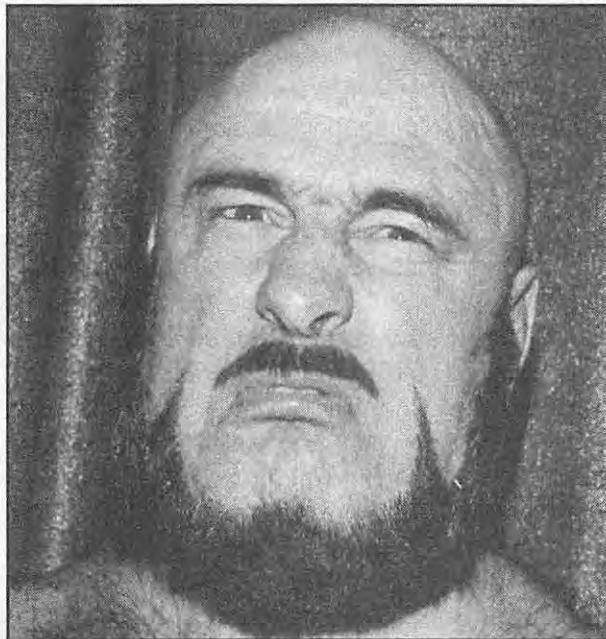
DIESEL: You mean *barely* breathing. So what? I had mercy on a helpless senior citizen. So sue me.

MDV: I'll do more than that. There's a lot of fight left in this body.

DIESEL: A lot of fight and not much leg. You know where to find me.

MDV: I don't care where you are—I'll find you if I need to. And I don't care how big you are or how bad you think you are. You'll pay for what you

N ONE



"I don't care how big you are or how bad you think you are. You'll pay for what you did. Somehow, some way, you'll pay a high price!"

—Mad Dog Vachon

did. Somehow, some way, you'll pay a high price!

DIESEL: Now why would I fear you? I am a former WWF champion. What did you do when you wrestled back in the Stone Age?

MDV: I was a two-time AWA champion and a two-time AWA tag team champion.

DIESEL: The AWA, Mad Dog? Gee, what channel are they on now?

MDV: That's where we differ, Diesel. I didn't need TV to build my reputation. I just left trails of blood and broken bones in every city in this country.

DIESEL: Well, you shoulda stayed out of Omaha.

MDV: That's another thing. What did I do to provoke that attack?

DIESEL: I didn't like your face, your bald head, or anything about you.

You took up valuable interview time during the "Free For All" show that night. That could have been my time. No one steals the spotlight from me.

MDV: I think Shawn Michaels did just fine stealing your spotlight.

DIESEL: One night. You know better than anyone that one night doesn't mean jack. Shawn Michaels proved that it's better to be lucky than good.

MDV: I'm just glad that my leg could help him.

DIESEL: That's the only thing that could have helped him. If it wasn't for that low blow and illegal object, I'd be wearing that belt right now.

MDV: You're the one who brought my prosthetic leg into the ring!

DIESEL: But I didn't need it. I just felt like beating up on an old man. Shawn was getting too easy. I needed something more. Something different.

MDV: You want something more? I'll give you something more.

DIESEL: Now I'm shaking. One "Big Daddy Cool" fist to you and you'd crumble into a pile of dust.

MDV: Ask anyone who faced the Dog. Ask Verne Gagne, Crusher—ask them all! Those aches and pains that they still feel are because of me.

DIESEL: Yeah, I'll ask them. What's the number of the wrestlers' old folks home?

MDV: You got quite a mouth, but can you back it up?

DIESEL: Easy. Ask Backlund. Ask Shawn. Ask Bret Hart. Ask The Undertaker. No one dominated like I did. Not even you.

MDV: You're fooling yourself. You started out as a fan. I'm sure you saw me on TV. You know what I'm capable of.

DIESEL: Sorry, Vachon. I think I was just a gleam in my daddy's eye then. In fact, my daddy was probably a gleam in my grandfather's eye. No, my grand—

MDV: You're very funny. I get the point. And you will, too. It probably won't be in a wrestling ring. Maybe in the street or a back alley. You best grow eyes in the back of your head.

DIESEL: Why? Because of you?

MDV: That's right. No one can swing this leg better than its owner. It's like a ballplayer's favorite bat.

DIESEL: So you'd jump me from behind? Hardly sportsmanlike.

MDV: You jumped this dog in his own yard. You should know something about paybacks.

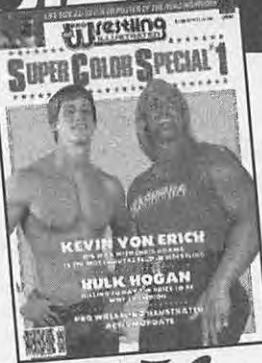
DIESEL: I'm real worried. You should haul your brother out of the nursing home and stack him on top of you. You two together still wouldn't come close to my size!

MDV: I'm warning you now. You're responsible for this beast being awakened. Now the leash is off and this dog is ready to bite.

DIESEL: Just don't get your false teeth stuck in my leg. And don't pick a fight that you have no hope of winning.

MDV: I'll take my chances. I've fought bigger and better. Just wait, Diesel. When you least expect it, expect it. □

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Sincerely Yours

(Continued from page 5)

END OF THE ROAD

I think The Road Warriors are doomed to fail this time around, but it won't be, as you suggested, entirely Hawk's fault ("The Legion Is Doomed: Hawk—The Final Straw That Will Break Animal's Back!" June 1996). Instead, I think their reputation will contribute to their demise.

The legend of the Warriors is known throughout the world. Just about every tag team is gunning for Animal and Hawk with the hopes of being the team to beat these legends and perhaps end their careers. This reaction from their opponents is a far cry from the reaction to the Warriors' first reign of terror.

During their early days in the AWA and NWA, Animal and Hawk were practically invincible. They would rush the ring and pulverize just about every team they went up against. Now Hawk and Animal are too laid back; they don't have that same mystique they once did. I feel they are now using their legendary status as an intimidation factor, but they no longer have the power and intensity to back it up. This is what will be the end of The Road Warriors.

Hawk and Animal should take note of Ric Flair's career. He was once one of the greatest wrestlers in the world, but now is just a shell of the man he used to be. He is tarnishing his status as a legend by not retiring while he still has some of his dignity.

OPHELIA HAWLEY
Trenton, NJ

DREAMING OF RAVEN'S DEMISE

I never really cared for Tommy Dreamer too much, but after reading

what Raven said to Liz Hunter during his "Hotseat" interview (June 1996), I became a Tommy Dreamer fan. I can't believe how self-centered and egotistical this sexist swine is! Raven doesn't deserve to compete in the ring, let alone hold the ECW heavyweight title.

Liz Hunter deserves a lot of credit for finishing the interview with her professional dignity intact. If I was in her position, I would have slapped his face and walked away, because no woman deserves to be treated the way Raven treats women. No wonder all of Raven's valets end up leaving him. It's because these ladies realize that he really isn't just acting macho—he's a real lowlife. I hope Tommy Dreamer knocks some more sense into him.

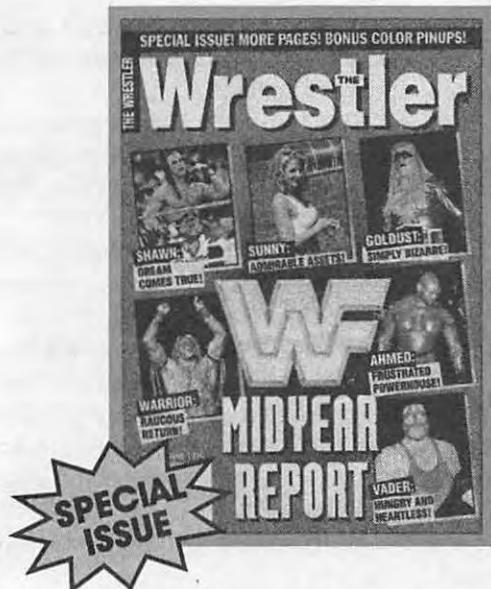
MILDRED CULLIN
Hanover, PA □



Tommy Dreamer did not have a fan in Mildred Cullin until Cullin read our recent interview with Raven, Dreamer's arch-rival in ECW. Now she's encouraging Dreamer to pummel Raven every chance he gets.

This Month In...

The Wrestler



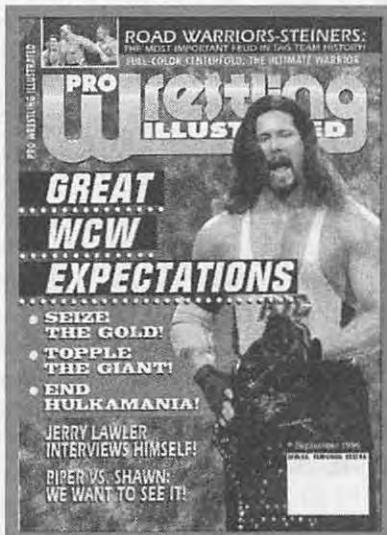
It's that time of year again—time to look at who in the WWF has shined during the first half of '96 and who is falling behind the rest of the class. You're sure to enjoy our special **WWF MIDYEAR REPORT** ...

THE GIANT became the first rookie in wrestling history to win a world heavyweight title when he beat **RIC FLAIR** for the WCW belt. He talks about that and more in "Q & A" ... Find out why **CHRIS BENOIT** is running out of patience in WCW ... We all know **SABU**, and we certainly know he's no coward. But if that's true, why did he flee from **2 COLD SCORPIO**?

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DIESEL'S first stint in WCW was hardly memorable, but his second could be spectacular. We think he must do *three* things if he wants to be an overwhelming success there: End **HULKAMANIA**, topple **THE GIANT**, and seize the World title! ... Did we see the last of **RODDY PIPER** at WrestleMania XII? Maybe so, but don't you think he has one more thing to accomplish? How about beating **SHAWN MICHAELS**?! ... **JERRY LAWLER** has been interviewed dozens and dozens of times, and he says he's tired of the same old questions. So we let him interview *himself*!

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On The Road

(Continued from page 10)

walked. After four hours, I stumbled upon an oddly deserted part of town and noticed some deserted warehouses. A few utility poles were covered with flyers advertising wrestling matches. This must be the place.

But where? I walked up and down the alleys, peeked into a few buildings, and saw nothing but piles upon piles of stock. Then, just around 3 o'clock, I saw seven oversized men walking out of a building that was covered with graffiti.

This was the place, the very unfamous Chun-Hi-Wing Athletic Club—no signs, no telephone numbers. I walked inside and couldn't believe what I saw.

In the middle of a room that measured the size of a football field was a wrestling ring. I looked up and saw the type of apparatuses acrobats would use in a circus. There were parallel bars, balance beams,

climbing ropes, and bars for chin-ups. Suddenly, two men came swinging down from the ropes. One of them released about 25 feet from the ground and landed on a huge padded mat.

And suddenly I realized what was going on in this seemingly primitive setting.

The future of Japanese aerial wrestling was using state-of-the-art methods on less-than-state-of-the-art equipment to train.

Pictures of famous wrestlers covered the walls. There was a huge portrait of Antonio Inoki. The athletes went through their training routines; nobody even noticed me. Two hours later, I was standing in the same spot, watching these marvelous future athletes become even more marvelous.

Sorry, Matt, I think I like this country. □



Where do Japanese aerial wrestlers such as Tiger Mask and Jushin Liger hone their sensational high-flying skills? Perhaps in an athletic club in Tokyo that very few know about.

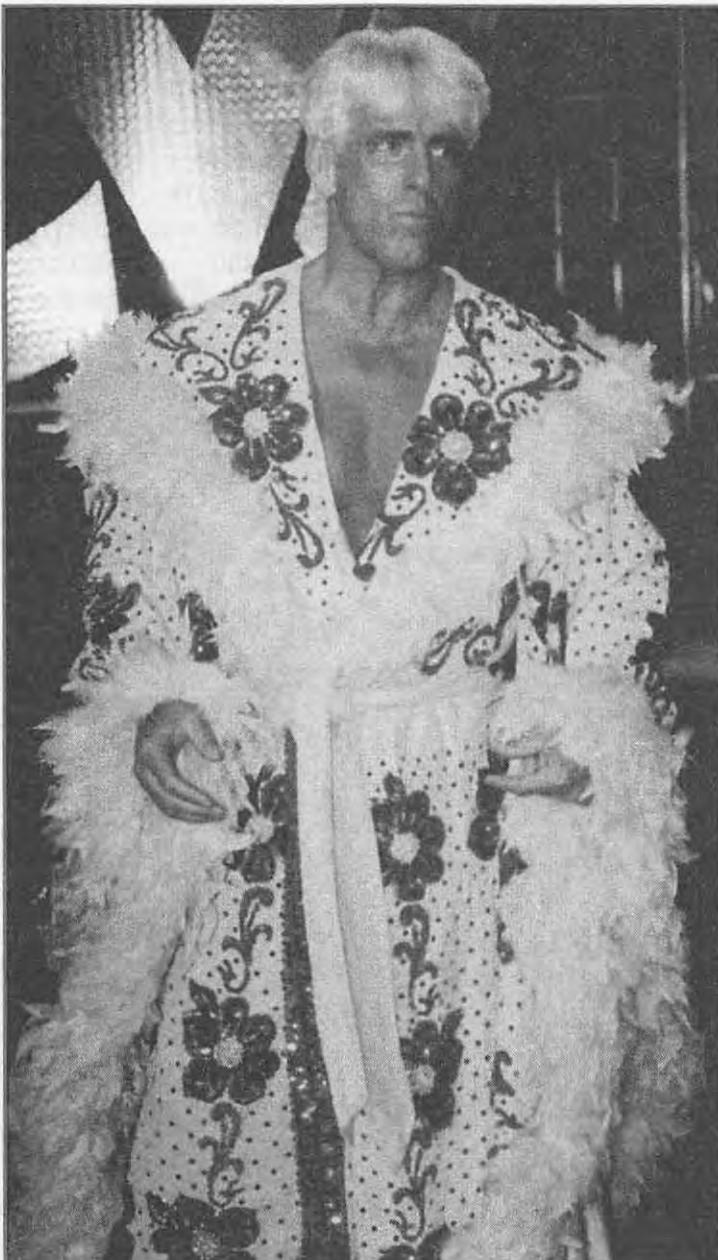
Behind the Door

(Continued from page 12)

potentially harmful decisions, but I really wouldn't want to see anything so heinous happen. Flair merely needs to learn to keep his ego in check; he isn't as dominant as he once was.

NEWS ITEM: Henry and Phineas Godwinn try to ban Sunny, saying her shapely form keeps getting in their way. Sunny's flashing antics have distracted the Godwinn's and enabled The Bodydonnas to first win and then successfully defend the WWF World tag team belts. "She don't do nothin' out there," cries the Godwinn's manager, Hillbilly Jim. "All she does is stir up trouble. All my boys ask for is a fair fight, and when she's around, they can't concentrate, and it sure ain't fair!"

WHY IT'S FAIR: There's absolutely nothing Sunny can do to stop this distraction short of coming to the ring wearing a potato sack. And she's certainly not going to do that. Most importantly, the Godwinn's are professional wrestlers and should be able to keep their minds on business. They know she's going to try to distract Phineas, so they should



Ric Flair also had no right to complain when The Giant beat him for the WCW World title on April 22, says Rosenbaum, who argues that the "Nature Boy" knew what he was getting into when he accepted Giant's challenge.

be prepared for it. On the other hand, maybe the Godwinn's and Jim are spending too much time on their days off sitting in rocking chairs and drinking cases of Keystone. Maybe they still think a woman's place is in the kitchen, barefoot and pregnant.

Can you believe this whining?

REMEDY: Let Henry and Phineas see Yokozuna in a thong. They'll thank the heavens for Sunny.

NEWS ITEM: WCW fans complain because the NBA playoffs force TNT to reschedule *Monday Nitro* for a month.

WHY IT'S FAIR: Because Ted Turner said so. There is, you know, other wrestling on at that time ... as in *WWF Monday Night Raw*. Check out *WCW Prime Time* on your cable sports network if you have to. Better yet, have dinner with the family. Sit around and discuss the latest *Mallard Filmore* cartoon. Yes, I agree that basketball can be boring, but at least in the NBA, they're not always trying to figure out which side everybody is on.

REMEDY: Ban the NBA. Hey, how hard could that be?

Well, that's it for this edition of our new feature, although I'm sure there'll be plenty more material for future columns. There's a lot of whining going on in wrestling. What fans really need are earplugs. □

The Insider

(Continued from page 14)

phone call, however, it seemed as if "Mr. Perfect" was in no mood to talk.

"Are you planning to return to the ring anytime soon?"

"As a referee or as a wrestler?"

"As a wrestler."

Silence.

"Do you like officiating from outside the ring?"

"It's fine."

"Is it possible to assert the same authority from outside the ring as from inside the ring?"

"For me it is."

"Why were you scouting that Shawn Michaels-Hunter Hearst Helmsley match at *Raw* a few weeks ago? Was it for managerial purposes, or do you plan on taking a shot at Michaels' WWF World title soon?"

Silence.

Only when I asked Hennig how he felt about refereeing as opposed to wrestling did he give me a decent answer.

"I'm a wrestler," Hennig said. "My father was a wrestler and my brother is a wrestler. There's only one thing to be in this sport, and that's a wrestler, and if you can't be that, you want to be a manager, and if that's not possible, you want to be a broadcaster or a referee."

Maybe far down on the list, if you're really desperate, you'd want to be a writer."

He laughed, I laughed, and the conversation ended with little insight provided from "Mr. Perfect," unless you read between the lines. It's obvious Hennig's back injury is still a serious concern and is pre-

venting him from making a full-time return to the ring. It's also apparently preventing him from managing, because, as Hennig realizes, managers often find themselves in the physical fray. The only thing he can do is officiate, and he prefers to do that from outside the ring.

That brings me back to what I



"Mr. Perfect" didn't have anything to say when I asked him about the possibility of him returning to the ring to challenge Shawn Michaels, but if he does do it, I know he'll clean Michaels' clock the way he did in 1993.

said about Hennig revolutionizing the way matches are officiated. The ring is too small for two or four wrestlers and a referee. Take out the referee and there's more room. You'd never have to worry about referees getting knocked unconscious, and as far as keeping order, a referee's authority is

enough to do that. The fact is that a referee can't separate two 300-pound men who don't want to be separated, so what's the use of him working from inside the ring?

The problem for Hennig is that staying completely uninvolved is impossible. While broadcasting a match in April, he tossed the World belt to Diesel, who slammed Michaels over the head. This was typical Hennig—short and sweet—and evidence he has no plans of spending the rest of his career as an impartial arbiter. He was obviously favoring Jerry Lawler in "The King's" series of matches against Razor Ramon in May. Does this make him a crooked referee? No. It makes him more honest than most because at least he, unlike the other fan favorite-favoring idiots, doesn't hide what he is.

The question for Hennig is how much longer he can get away with this, and the probable answer is long enough. Another possibility is that Hennig is trying to draw Roddy Piper back into the fray, at which point even an injured Hennig would teach Piper the lesson that Goldust couldn't or wouldn't.

To answer Apter's question, maybe the new Hennig is even cagier than the old version, if that's possible, and the new Hennig is less concerned about appearances. That's something the rest of the WWF should be a little concerned about, because the old Hennig was dangerous enough. The new version could be lethal. □

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On Assignment

(Continued from page 16)

these groups to come together."

In other words, the card—which will have already taken place by the time you read this—transcends the business of wrestling, which the WWF and WCW are consumed by, and strikes to the heart of the sport of wrestling, which the WWF and WCW seem to have forgotten in their little tiff. Sport of wrestling. Business of wrestling. They should be separate entities, but they haven't been for a long time, ever since the early-1980s, when a man named Vince McMahon Jr. decided that the WWF should live up to its name and be the *World* Wrestling Federation. Animals naturally battle over territory, and this is the granddaddy of sports territorial battles.

For those who were willing to settle for second best, the World Wrestling Peace Festival card was to feature those six WCW stars, but wouldn't it have been great if superstars such as Hulk Hogan, Randy Savage, Shawn Michaels, Diesel, Razor Ramon, Big Van Vader, Ric Flair, Arn Anderson, and Bret Hart were there, too? That's what promoters originally wanted.

In fact, one organizer involved with the World Wrestling Peace Festival told me, "We weren't necessarily looking for Hogan vs. Bret Hart or any kind of interfederation match. Hart vs. Michaels, or something like that within the federation, would have been just fine, too. If we couldn't have that, we would've gladly taken any of the WWF's

secondary stars. Anything, as long as the WWF and WCW were both represented. It was important."

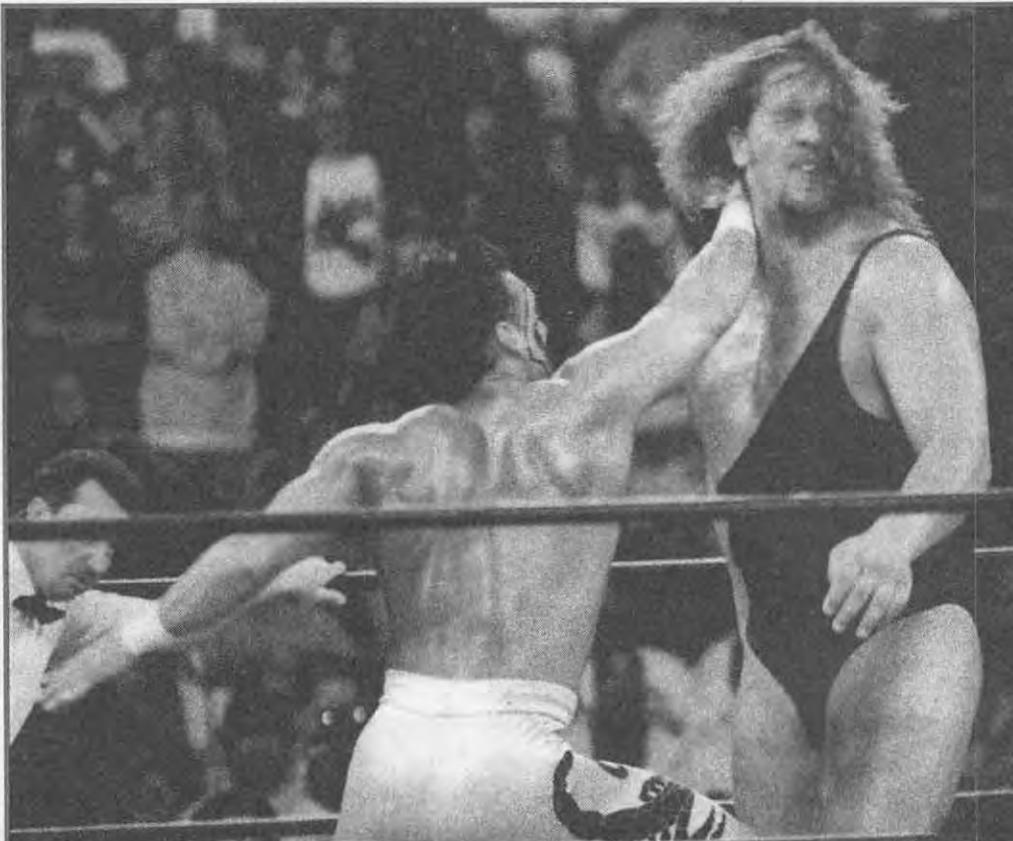
WCW's participation was certainly acceptable, but the WWF ignored the event totally. The federation that wants to be the choice of the "New Generation" refused to participate in one of the most forward wrestling ideas of all-time. Maybe the WWF didn't want to get involved in something in which it couldn't control all the money from merchandising, but that's just the point. Again, promoters were hoping to break even on a packed arena.

About a year ago, a few colleagues of mine predicted that the WWF and WCW were close to getting together on a huge megacard. It looks like they were wrong.

But at least we have made some progress in wrestling in the last year. At least the WWF and WCW are no longer ignoring each other on their shows.

McMahon, though he has never mentioned WCW by name on WWF telecasts, took shots at his rival with those hilarious "Billionaire Ted" skits. And Eric Bischoff isn't shy at all about mentioning the WWF by name on WCW telecasts, even if he only does so when he's ripping the WWF. It's not much, but it's a little progress.

Maybe things have to hit rock bottom in a relationship before it can get turned around. The WWF and WCW have hit rock bottom. There is no peace between these hated rivals. □



One of the scheduled matches on the card in was a showdown between WCW World champion The Giant and three-time former champion Sting. A great match on a great card, but, according to Liz Hunter, the fact that WWF was not present diminished the overall impact.

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March 1991/Stories include: Hogan-Earthquake, Roberts-Martel, Sting.
April 1991/Stories include: Flair-Sting, Steiners, Piper, Zbyszko, Slaughter.
May 1991/Stories include: Savage-Warrior, Steiners, Sting, Virgil.
June 1991/Stories include: Steiners, LOD, Koloff, I-C belt, Dundees.
July 1991/Stories include: Hogan, Virgil, Nastys, Steiners, Spivey.
September 1991/Stories include: Justice-Hogan, Hyatt, Rude, Hennig.
October 1991/Stories include: Savage & Liz, Hogan & Warrior, Luger.

November 1991/Stories include: Hogan-Savage, Luger, Flair, War Games.
January 1992/Stories include: Sting, Freebirds, Hart, Rhodes, Rotundo.
May 1992/Stories include: Justice-Hogan, Liger, Gilbert, Repo Man.
June 1992/Stories include: Sting, Hogan, Race, Bagwell, Atlas.
August 1992/Stories include: Savage-Flair, Jack-Badd, Christopher, LOD.
September 1992/Stories include: War Games, Hogan, Vader, Kamala.
November 1992/Stories include: Flair, Warrior, Vader, top rope rule.
March 1993/Stories include: Michaels, Koloff, Windham-Rhodes.
June 1993/Stories include: Doink, Vader, Sting, Hart, Steiners, Lawler.
July 1993/Stories include: Bravo, Gonzales, Bulldog, Ramon, Arn.
August 1993/Stories include: Hogan-Yokozuna, Hart, Christopher.
September 1993/Stories include: Steiners, Slamboree, Ramon, Sting & Smith.
October 1993/Stories include: SummerSlam, Money Inc., Vader-Vicious.
November 1993/Stories include: Bodies, Jonnetty, Rude-Flair, Hogan, Luger.
December 1993/Stories include: Fyach, Austin, Luger, Yokozuna, Sting & Flair.
February 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Duggan, Doinks, Blonds, holiday wishes.
March 1994/Stories include: Nastys, Parker, Borga, 1994 predictions.
May 1994/Stories include: Flair-Rude, Hart, Luger, Morton, Heenan.

June 1994/Stories include: Steamboat, Snuka, Anthony, Bruises, Blayne.
August 1994/Stories include: Piper, Hogan, 911, Freebirds, rulebreakers.
September 1994/Stories include: Nastys, Undertaker, Flair-Steamboat.
November 1994/Stories include: Dibiase, Sting, Diesel, Cactus-Sabu.
December 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Bret, Rottens, Cactus, AAA midgets.
January 1995/Stories include: Vader, Diesel & Razor, Hart, Luger, Sabu.
February 1995/Stories include: Sting, McMahon-Lawler, Woman, Brutus-Hogan.
March 1995/Stories include: Nastys, Ramon, Tasmania, 1995 predictions.
May 1995/Stories include: Michaels, Mabel, Diesel, Undertaker, Hogan.
June 1995/Stories include: Hogan-Savage, Austin, Gangstas, Public Enemy.
August 1995/Stories include: Badd, Bigelow, Studd, Bubba-Sting.
September 1995/Stories include: Vicious, Flair-Hogan, Severn, Mabel.
November 1995/Stories include: Hogan, Wright, Tatanka, Backlund-Clinton.
December 1995/Stories include: Undertaker, Vader, Renegade, Gangstas-PE.
January 1996/Stories include: Norton, Vicious, Psicosis-Misterio.
February 1996/Stories include: 1996 predictions, Goldust, Sherri-Parker.
April 1996/Stories include: Diesel, Kid, Savage-Sting-Luger-Hogan.
May 1996/Stories include: Austin, Public Enemy, Vader, Sasaki, weirdness.

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Losing the AWA tag team championship may turn out to be the break Scott Hall needs to rise to the top of his profession

THE MATCH HAD reached that point where both teams realized who would win; the only things left to be decided are when and how. The Long Riders had pinned Scott Hall into their corner and while Scott "Hog" Irwin choked him from behind with a motorcycle chain, brother Bill put his entire 270 pounds into four crunching forearms to Hall's face and midsection.

They might as well have been pelting him with cotton balls.

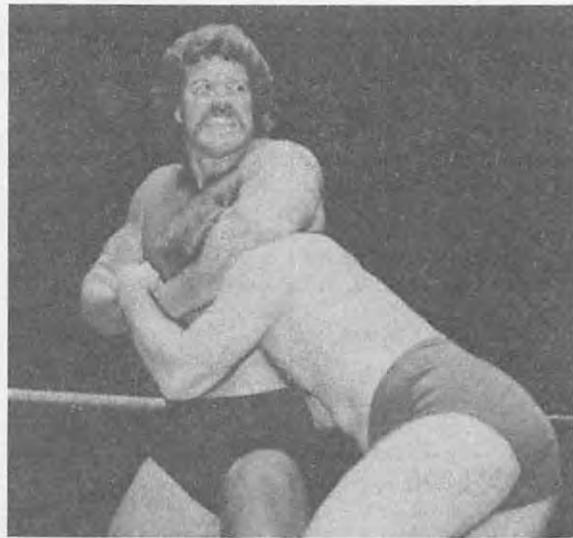
With a single heave of his mighty

chest, Hall deposited Hog over the top rope, the Harley Davidson stitching on the back of his jeans doing little to break his fall. Hall focused his attention on the remaining Irwin brother, who suddenly lost his nerve and started a hasty retreat backward. Hall grabbed Bill by the hair and lifted him high above his head (as Hall stands 6'8" the weather up there is quite frigid) and dumped him to the mat. The arena shuddered with the impact of the blow. Hall placed a finger on Irwin's head and the referee counted the pin.

Curt Hennig, the other half the AWA tag team championship, bounded over the ropes to congratulate his partner. Hennig shook Hall enthusiastically and praised his partner in the postmatch interviews. "Hall is the best wrestler to come along in years. I'm honored to be in a position to teach this man and watch him grow."

Hennig may no longer get the opportunity. Several nights later, in Hammond, Indiana, Hennig and Hall became ex-champions. While Hennig was embroiled with Doug Somers and the

On The Verge Of Superstardom:



LOSING THE AWA TEAM TITLE WAS BREAK SCOTT HALL

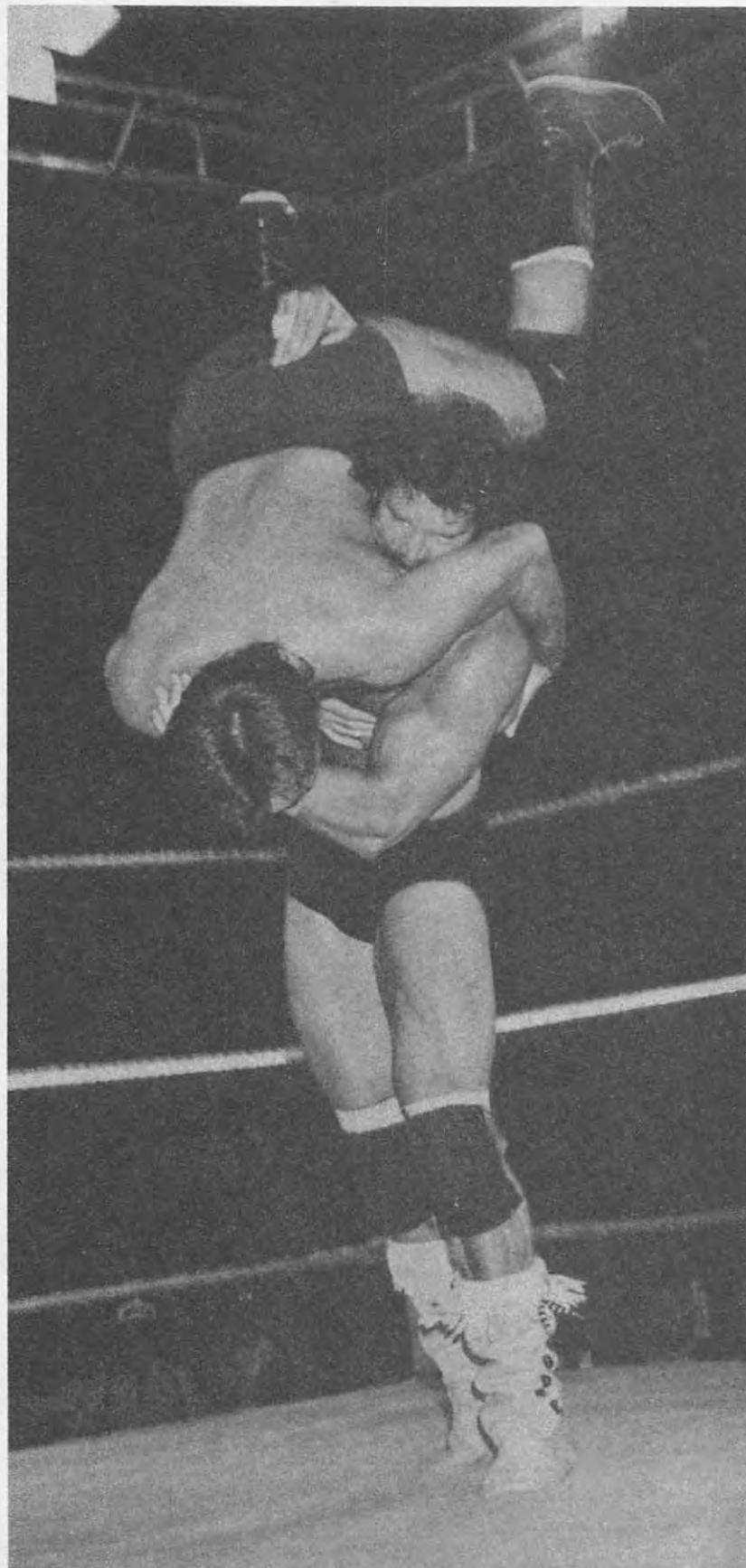
referee on one side of the ring, Playboy Buddy Rose and Col. DeBeers attacked Hall outside the ring. According to an obscure AWA rule—of which Hall was unaware and *Inside Wrestling*'s editors are still trying to figure out—titles can change hands on certain types of countouts. As Hall slugged it out with DeBeers, he and the title were counted out, and the belts were awarded to Somers and Rose.

While Hall commiserated over the loss of his first major championship, his future was barely dimmed. Most critics agree that Hall was handicapped within the tag team, his natural abilities harnessed to the limitations of his

INSIDE WRESTLING CLASSIC!
Ten years ago, we thought Scott Hall (a.k.a. Razor Ramon) could fulfill his superstar potential if he focused on singles wrestling. He did. Now he's making another major career move and heading to WCW, where he'll likely have a lot of success. To learn more about a young Hall, check out this "Inside Wrestling Classic" from September 1986!



TAG THE NEEDED



partner. Not that Curt Hennig isn't a fine wrestler; just that Scott Hall may be the best young wrestler in the country. No kidding.

"He's the best I've seen in 20 years," says Greg Gagne. According to our calendar, 20 years ago would correspond to the prime of one Mr. Verne Gagne. Mere coincidence?

"There's no reason for me to be prejudiced," explains away Greg. "It would be foolish for anyone to deny that my father was one of the greatest wrestlers of all time. For me to say Scott Hall ranks alongside him is an extraordinary compliment.



Hall displays his great strength by flipping Nord The Barbarian (above) and slamming Larry Zbyszko (left).

"I'm one of Curt's closest friends and in no way do I wish to diminish the respect I have for his talent. But a Scott Hall comes along only every once in a while. To realize the expanse of his great talent, he must wrestle alone. Great champions need to be on their own. Eventually he would grow restless in a tag team. Even being a world tag team champion was too confining."

Ever since he was discovered in a south Florida grocery store by Barry Windham, Hall has been wooing supporters. Rick Martel, who helped train Hall as a rookie, claims he is "as advanced as any wrestler he has ever seen with such limited experience."

It was Martel who suggested tag teaming in order for Hall to taste the

rigors of the sport slowly. But now Martel offers different advice. "Hall should be out on his own now," the former WWF tag team champion and AWA World champion said. "Wrestling in tag teams early in my career gave me confidence and experience, but there was a point where I had to make that break. If I didn't, I would have remained a tag team wrestler my entire career."

"Hall should be in the ring against Larry Zbyszko and Col. DeBeers. Given his natural abilities, he should be ready to give Hansen a run for his money by the end of the year."

After Hall and Dan "Starship Eagle" Spivey broke up their successful tag team, Hall ventured into several single encounters against Zbyszko and Nick Bockwinkel. Bockwinkel remembers the match distinctly.

"Hall was very green. I managed to defeat him, but it required all the guile and tricks I'd acquired during my 25 years in the ring. What makes him such a difficult opponent is his size and his speed. The only big man I've seen with his speed was Don Leo Jonathan, and he was one of the greatest."

"After he and Hennig won the belts, I knew the next time I faced Hall in a singles match it would be more of a struggle than the first time. The kid has the potential to be a superstar. Now that he's not burdened down with a tag team partner, his career should take off."

Comparisons to such legends as Jonathan and Gagne do not move Hall. "I appreciate the compliments," the soft-spoken youngster says, "but talk is cheap. I just want to get out in the ring and do the best I can. I know I've been blessed with extraordinary talent and I mean for the world of wrestling to soon find out all I've got. I've got the goods and I'm going to deliver them. After all, actions speak louder than words."

His words belie his actions. Scott Hall is anything but a cliche in the ring. □

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BACK ISSUES

INSIDE WRESTLING'S OFFICIAL RATINGS

TOP 15

1—SHAWN MICHAELS

(1) WWF World champion

2—THE GIANT

(2) WCW World champion

3—THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR

(12) No. 3 contender: WWF World title

4—STING

(4) No. 2 contender: WCW World title

5—KONNAN

(9) U.S. heavyweight champion

6—GOLDUST

(13) WWF Intercontinental champion

7—BIG VAN VADER

(7) No. 7 contender: WWF World title

8—LEX LUGER

(6) WCW TV champion

9—DAVEY BOY SMITH

(-) No. 2 contender: WWF World title

10—JEFF JARRETT

(8) USWA heavyweight champion

11—THE UNDERTAKER

(5) No. 4 contender: WWF World title

12—RAVEN

(10) ECW heavyweight champion

13—JERRY LAWLER

(-) USWA Southern champion

14—DEAN MALENKO

(-) WCW cruiserweight champion

15—AHMED JOHNSON

(-) No. 5 contender: WWF World title

WCW

1—THE GIANT

(1) 430, parts unknown

2—KONNAN

(2) 237, Mexico City, Mexico

3—STING

(3) 260, Venice Beach, CA

4—LEX LUGER

(4) 265, Chicago, IL

5—RANDY SAVAGE

(7) 237, Sarasota, FL

6—DEAN MALENKO

(-) 216, Tampa, FL

7—RIC FLAIR

(6) 243, Minneapolis, MN

8—ARN ANDERSON

(13) 249, Minneapolis, MN

9—EDDY GUERRERO

(10) 221, Los Angeles, CA

10—BRAD ARMSTRONG

(15) 226, Marietta, GA

11—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE

(-) 260, Tampa, FL

12—BOOTY MAN

(9) 273, San Francisco, CA

13—CHRIS BENOIT

(12) 218, Edmonton, Alberta

14—LORD STEVEN REGAL

(-) 247, Blackpool, England

15—ALEX WRIGHT

(14) 222, Berlin, Germany

WWF

1—SHAWN MICHAELS

(1) 234, San Antonio, TX

2—GOLDUST

(2) 254, Austin, TX

3—DAVEY BOY SMITH

(7) 245, Leeds, England

4—THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR

(3) 273, Scottsdale, AZ

5—THE UNDERTAKER

(4) 328, parts unknown

6—AHMED JOHNSON

(11) 255, Pearl River, MS

7—YOKOZUNA

(-) 589, Samoa

8—BIG VAN VADER

(5) 450, Denver, CO

9—SAVIO VEGA

(8) 260, Vega Alta, Puerto Rico

10—MARC MERO

(-) 235, Macon, GA

11—STEVE AUSTIN

(9) 241, Dallas, TX

12—HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY

(12) 279, Greenwich, CT

13—JAKE ROBERTS

(15) 253, Stone Mountain, GA

14—JERRY LAWLER

(-) 234, Memphis, TN

15—MANKIND

(13) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM

MOST POPULAR

1—SHAWN MICHAELS

Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular

2—STING

Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular

3—THE UNDERTAKER

Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular

4—THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR

Last issue: No. 1 Most Popular

5—RANDY SAVAGE

Last issue: No. 9 Most Popular

6—LEX LUGER

Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular

7—AHMED JOHNSON

Last issue: No. 8 Most Popular

8—YOKOZUNA

Last issue: unrated

9—EDDY GUERRERO

Last issue: No. 10 Most Popular

10—SAVIO VEGA

Last issue: No. 7 Most Popular

11—MARC MERO

Last issue: No. 12 Most Popular

12—TOMMY DREAMER

Last issue: No. 13 Most Popular

13—BOOTY MAN

Last issue: unrated

14—SABU

Last issue: unrated

15—JESSE JAMES ARMSTRONG

Last issue: No. 14 Most Popular

MOST HATED

1—GOLDUST

Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated

2—DAVEY BOY SMITH

Last issue: No. 4 Most Hated

3—THE GIANT

Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated

4—RIC FLAIR

Last issue: No. 6 Most Hated

5—JERRY LAWLER

Last issue: No. 10 Most Hated

6—BIG VAN VADER

Last issue: No. 3 Most Hated

7—ARN ANDERSON

Last issue: No. 15 Most Hated

8—KEVIN SULLIVAN

Last issue: No. 9 Most Hated

9—JEFF JARRETT

Last issue: No. 11 Most Hated

10—MANKIND

Last issue: No. 5 Most Hated

11—STEVE AUSTIN

Last issue: No. 7 Most Hated

12—RAVEN

Last issue: No. 12 Most Hated

13—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE

Last issue: unrated

14—HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY

Last issue: No. 14 Most Hated

15—MABEL

Last issue: No. 13 Most Hated

TOP 15 TAG TEAMS

1—THE SMOKIN' GUNNS

(-) WWF World tag team champions

2—LEX LUGER & STING

(2) WCW World tag team champions

3—HENRY & PHINEAS GODWINN

(3) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title

4—RICK & SCOTT STEINER

(6) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title

5—SKIP & ZIP

(1) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title

6—THE ROAD WARRIORS

(4) No. 2 contenders: WCW World tag title

7—BILL DUNDEE & JERRY LAWLER

(-) USWA tag team champions

8—THE ELIMINATORS

(8) ECW tag team champions

9—THE CYBERPUNKS

(9) No. 1 contenders: USWA tag tag title

10—THE NASTY BOYS

(7) No. 3 contenders: WCW World tag title

11—LEIF CASSIDY & MARTY JANNETTY

(-) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title

12—MARCUS BAGWELL & SCOTTY RIGGS

(11) No. 4 contenders: WCW World tag title

13—THE GANGSTAS

(10) No. 1 contenders: ECW tag title

14—THE BUSHWHACKERS

(14) No. 4 contenders: WWF World tag title

15—PUBLIC ENEMY

(-) No. 5 contenders: WCW World tag title

These ratings are compiled by the editors with the assistance of promoters, wrestlers, and reporters around the country, and are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue... "Most Popular" and "Most Hated" ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and on mail that comes to our offices ... Championships highlighted in bold on the "Roll Call Of Champions" have changed hands since our previous issue ... The information under the championship listing indicates the date that champion won the title, who the former champion was, and where the match took place.

For period ended May 28, 1996

ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS

ALL-JAPAN ASIAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: JUN AKIYAMA & TAKAO OMORI
(January 29, 1995; from Bobby Fulton & Tommy Rogers; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: AKIRA TAUE
(May 24, 1996; from Mitsuharu Misawa; Sapporo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: YOSHINARI OGAWA
(September 3, 1995; from Dan Kroffat; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN UNITED NATIONAL CHAMPION: AKIRA TAUE
(May 24, 1996; from Mitsuharu Misawa; Sapporo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S ALL-PACIFIC CHAMPION: YUMIKO HOTTA
(September 24, 1995; from Toshiyo Yamada; Kawasaki, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S CHAMPION: DYNAMITE KANSAI
(August 30, 1995; from Aja Kong; Osaka, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
AKIRA HOKUTO & MIMA SHIMODA
(September 24, 1995; from Kyoko Inoue & Takako Inoue; Kawasaki, Japan)

ALL-STATE WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: THE BLACK ASSASSIN
(October 21, 1995; from Billy Orderly; Fountain City, TN)

ALL-STATE WRESTLING TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: FELIX & LAWRENCE HUTTON
(March 7, 1996; from Tony Prichard & Lone Star; Alcoa, TN)

AMERICAN COMMONWEALTH HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: T. RANTULA
(March 26, 1994; from Rip Sawyer; Johnsonburg, PA)

AMERICAN COMMONWEALTH LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
JOHNNY GRAHAM
(October 14, 1995; from Lord Zoltan; Lewistown, PA)

ECW HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: RAVEN
(January 27, 1996; from The Sandman; Philadelphia, PA)

ECW TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE ELIMINATORS
(February 3, 1996; from Cactus Jack & Mikey Whipwreck; Rego Park, NY)

ECW TELEVISION CHAMPION: SHANE DOUGLAS
(May 11, 1996; from 2 Cold Scorpio; Philadelphia, PA)

IWGP HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: SHINYA HASHIMOTO
(April 29, 1996; from Nobuhiko Takada; Tokyo, Japan)

IWGP JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: THE GREAT SASUKE
(April 29, 1996; from Jushin Liger; Tokyo, Japan)

MIDWEST TERRITORIAL WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
TITLE VACANT
(Last held by Al Snow)

MIDWEST TERRITORIAL WRESTLING TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: LOS RUDOS
(September 9, 1995; from Otis Apollo & Scott D'Amore; Taylor, MI)

NWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DAN SEVERN
(February 24, 1995; from Chris Candido; Erlanger, KY)

NWA NORTH AMERICAN HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: TOMMY CAIRO
(July 15, 1995; beat Devon Storm in tournament final; Williamstown, NJ)

NORTH AMERICAN ALL-STAR WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
THE COLORADO KID
(April 21, 1996; from Justin St. John; Poplar Bluff, MO)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION CHAMPION: AKIRA TAUE
(May 24, 1996; from Mitsuharu Misawa; Sapporo, Japan)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
JUN AKIYAMA & MITSUHARU MISAWA
(May 23, 1996; from Toshiaki Kawada & Akira Taue; Sapporo, Japan)

PRO WRESTLING FEDERATION HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: CAROLINA DREAMER
(May 10, 1996; from George South; Hamlet, NC)

PRO WRESTLING FEDERATION TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
STAR RYDER & ITALIAN STALLION
(May 4, 1996; from Terry Austin & Austin Steele; Gaffney, SC)

TRI-STAR WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: CAMERON LONE WOLF
(November 3, 1995; from Jimmy Sharpe; Rossville, GA)

TRI-STAR WRESTLING TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: CHUCK COLT & RICK JUSTICE
(May 10, 1996; from The New One Man Gang & Joel Travis; Rossville, GA)

USWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JEFF JARRETT
(April 20, 1996; from Jerry Lawler; Memphis, TN)

USWA SOUTHERN CHAMPION: JERRY LAWLER
(May 20, 1996; from Mabel; Memphis, TN)

USWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BILL DUNDEE & JERRY LAWLER
(May 18, 1996; from The Cyberpunks; Memphis, TN)

WCW CRUISERWEIGHT CHAMPION: DEAN MALENKO
(May 2, 1996; from Shinjiro Otani; Orlando, FL)

WCW TELEVISION CHAMPION: LEX LUGER
(March 6, 1996; from Johnny B. Badd; Macon, GA)

WCW U.S. CHAMPION: KONNAN
(January 29, 1996; from One Man Gang; Canton, OH)

WCW WORLD CHAMPION: THE GIANT
(April 22, 1996; from Ric Flair; Albany, GA)

WCW WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: LEX LUGER & STING
(January 22, 1996; from Harlem Heat; Las Vegas, NV)

WORLD WRESTLING ALLIANCE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JIM MCPHERSON
(October 7, 1995; from Chris Evans; Clementon, NJ)

WORLD WRESTLING ALLIANCE TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BAD ATTITUDE
(June 3, 1995; from Doomsday Express; Clementon, NJ)

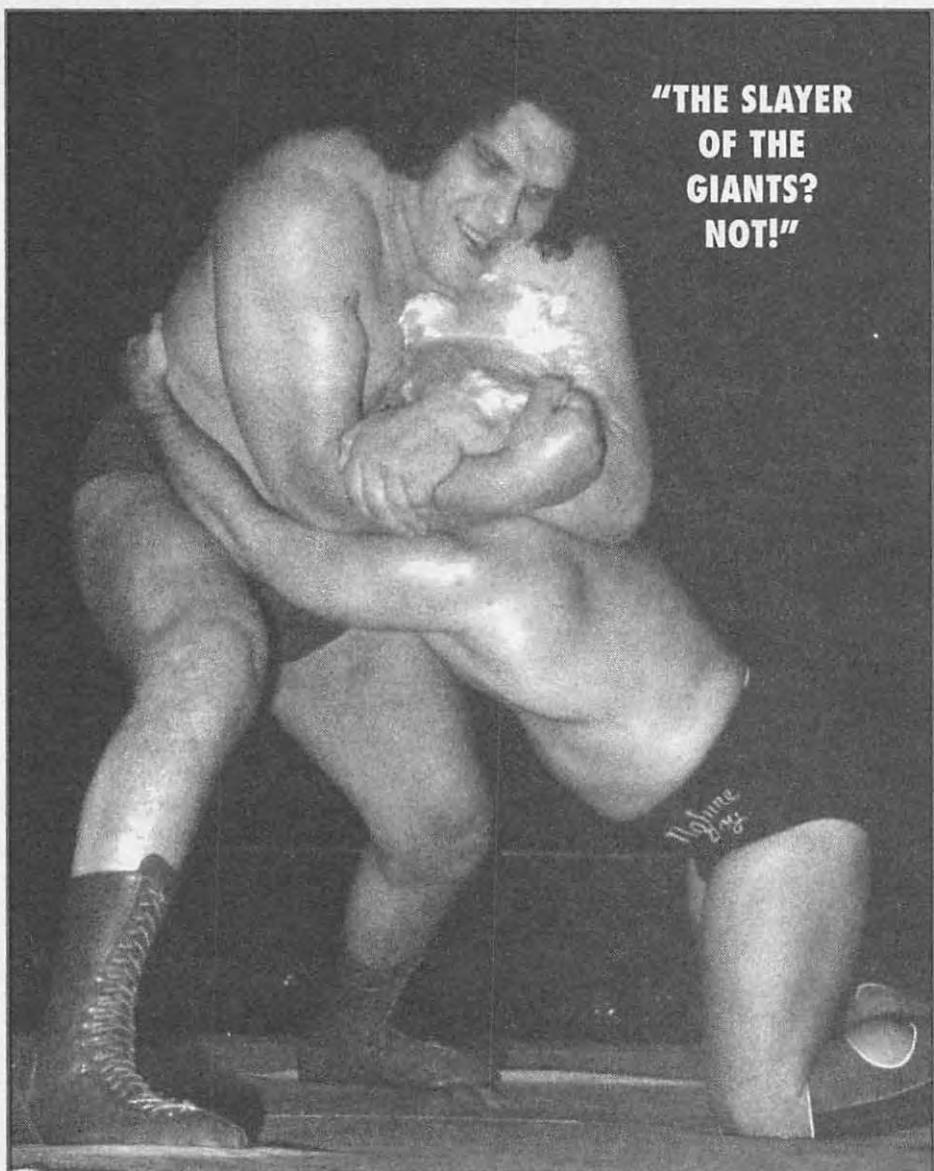
WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: GOLDUST
(April 1, 1996; title previously held up; San Bernardino, CA)

WWF WORLD CHAMPION: SHAWN MICHAELS
(March 31, 1996; from Bret Hart; Anaheim, CA)

WWF WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE SMOKIN' GUNNS
(May 26, 1996; from Henry & Phineas Godwinn; Florence, SC)

BLAST FROM THE PAST

This Month In Wrestling History



**"THE SLAYER
OF THE
GIANTS?
NOT!"**

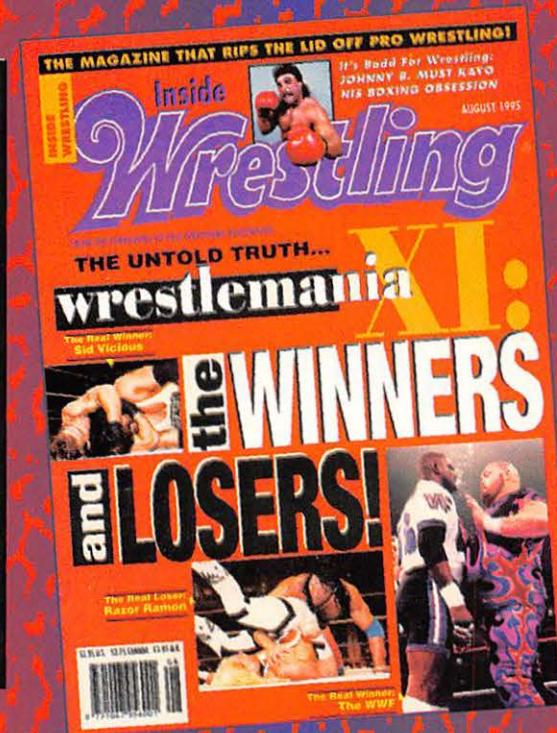
RIC FLAIR vs. ANDRE THE GIANT **September 1977**

Ric Flair actually had the gall to say The Giant got lucky when he beat him for the WCW World title in April. He said he was an expert at cutting big men down to size. Sorry, "Nature Boy," but history suggests you've had problems with seven-footers before. When Flair was NWA U.S. champion about 19 years ago, he ran into a man who stood 7'5" and weighed 500 pounds. Flair was the one who was lucky in that match—lucky that he got out of it with his title.

Andre dominated and won by disqualification.

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